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MIDDLEBURY COMMUNITY RESPONDS TO ISRAEL PALESTINE CONFLICT WITH VIGIL, EDUCATION EFFORTS

By LIV SANCHEZ
Staff Writer

The Middlebury community has reacted through both spiritual and educational efforts to ongoing violence in Israel and Gaza.

A vigil organized by Middlebury Chabad and Jewish students at the college was attended by around 150 people on Wednesday, Oct. 11, who gathered on McCullough lawn to remember and grieve the 1,400 Israelis killed by Hamas on Oct. 7.

Israel Institute Teaching Fellow Adi Livny, who teaches a course in the Hebrew Department titled "Israel-Palestine Conflict," spoke with The Campus to provide context on the escalating violence.

In 2006, after the years-long Israeli rule in Gaza ended in 2005, Hamas was elected by a majority of the Palestinian parliament, and has ruled the Gaza Strip since then via military blockade, according to Livny. Israel still controls the borders and supervises everything that comes in and out of Gaza, she said.

"From the Palestinian perspective, Gaza is considered the largest prison in the world, because it has a population of 2 million people who are very limited in their ability to leave Gaza or make a living because of the Israeli limitations," Livny said.

Livny and Associate Professor of Political Science Sebnem Gumuscu are having open office hours for any student who wants to discuss the issue, according to Mark Orten, dean of spiritual and religious life and director of the Scott Center.

Middlebury released a statement on Oct. 9 titled "Response to the War in Israel, Palestine." "Open expression and the free exchange of ideas are core to the Middlebury mission. However, there is no place here for hate, racism, ethnic discrimination, antisemitism, or Islamophobia. We have received unconfirmed reports of such acts on our Vermont campus, and we are investigating and will take appropriate action should any of these reports be confirmed,"

COURTESY PHOTO/DAVIDA MURRAY

150 students, faculty and community members gathered in solidarity to mourn the lives lost on Oct. 7 in Israel.

President Laurie Patton, Interim Provost and Executive Vice President Michelle McCauley and other administrators wrote in the update.

Middlebury Students for Justice in Palestine (SJP) released a statement on their Instagram on Oct. 11 in response to the recent events. "There will be no justice in Palestine without the end of occupation and apartheid… We were frustrated to see information released on campus which either spread misinformation or lacked important historical context. As Middlebury students, we are called to engage with a wide variety of viewpoints in order to arrive at a balanced conclusion."

Middlebury Hillel also posted a statement on their Instagram on Oct. 12. "Let us be clear: Middlebury Hillel stands firmly against the murder of both innocent Israelis and innocent Palestinians, and any attempts to justify these actions," the group wrote. "We are sending all of you strength to remain proudly Jewish and stick together during this hard time."

Orten explained the college's role in facilitating these discussions between different groups on campus in the context of international developments.

"As an educational institution, Middlebury values and encourages opportunities for open expression and the exchange of ideas among those with opposing viewpoints and supports peaceful protest," Orten wrote in an email to The Campus.

At the recent vigil, attendees passed around a prayer book, saying prayers and lighting candles for those who passed away in the Oct. 7 attack, according to Joshua Garson '25, who was in attendance.

Patton did not attend the Oct. 11 vigil for lives lost in Israel, but Rabbi Danielle Stillman delivered written remarks in her stead. In the remarks, Patton wrote, "Our hearts go out to all who have been affected by the deeply painful, destructive, and unacceptable violence we have seen in Israel and Gaza, which must be condemned in the strongest possible terms… As people of the world we long for justice, in and for Israel, in and for Palestine."

According to the Addison Independent police log, the Middlebury Police Department "Provided a presence at a Middlebury College student-organized candlelight vigil off Old Chapel Road on Oct. 11. Police said students requested their presence."

Some members of the Middlebury Muslim Student Association and Middlebury SJP traveled to Burlington recently to attend a candlelight vigil for the Palestinian lives that have been lost at the University of Vermont (UVM), and there have been ongoing discussions about holding a vigil on campus, although no such event is currently planned, according to Rabbi Stillman.

"A lot of people often call Judaism one of the most particularist religions, but I definitely interpret Jewish values, in many cases, to be universalist. And that's why I felt uncomfortable that this vigil was only mourning the Jewish deaths from this war in Gaza, and I would have liked to see a commemoration also of Palestinian and other lives," Joshua Glucksman '25, a member of SJP and Hillel, said.

Other members of the organizations declined to comment, citing security concerns amidst recent controversies at other colleges, such as the response to the Harvard SJP open letter on the situation and the university's response.

Glucksman added, "I know that myself and other students feel that there is a lack of mourning for the Palestinian lives lost, specifically because this event is part of a cycle of violence against Palestinians that has continued since the creation of the state of Israel."

"I feel it's very sad–my grandfather was the only survivor of the Holocaust in our family, he was at Auschwitz and he was liberated at Bergen-Belsen, so for me to see that the slaughter of Jews is again a rallying cry for any organization, and people don't condemn it… this was a victory for some people. And it shouldn't have been a victory for anyone," Garson said.

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LOCAL

Rising homelessness in Middlebury prompts community response

By JULIA PEPPER
Senior Local Editor

As the homeless population in Middlebury has grown in recent months, a group of local human services providers, business people and public safety officials haves re-established the Middlebury Homeless Task Force. The group was originally created to combat homelessness in the area about four years ago, but had not been active until this month since the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The current official count of the unhoused population of Addison County is approximately 146 individuals, according to Heidi Lacey, director of the Charter House Coalition, a 501c3 organization that has a warming shelter and provides community suppers in Middlebury. There are currently seven to ten individuals camping under the Cross Street Bridge bridge off Bakery Lane in downtown Middlebury.

One possible cause of recent rising rates of homelessness in Middlebury is the expiration of Vermont's hotel voucher program in June. Unhoused people were previously able to live in hotels across the state through this program, but the ending of state budget funding for it left a number of people living on the street, according to a reporting from the Addison Independent. Another potential explanation may be that individuals from nearby Washington County who were displaced by the July flooding are

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THROUGH OUR LENS: FOLIAGE, FALL AND THE UNEXPLORED

By SAM ROUBIN and DYLAN TAYLOR
Contributing Writers

Middlebury is a school that is largely defined by its outdoor access and culture. Yet, after four years of photographing Middlebury, as seniors we feel like the beautiful landscape surrounding the college is still underappreciated. If not underappreciated, then it is certainly underutilized.

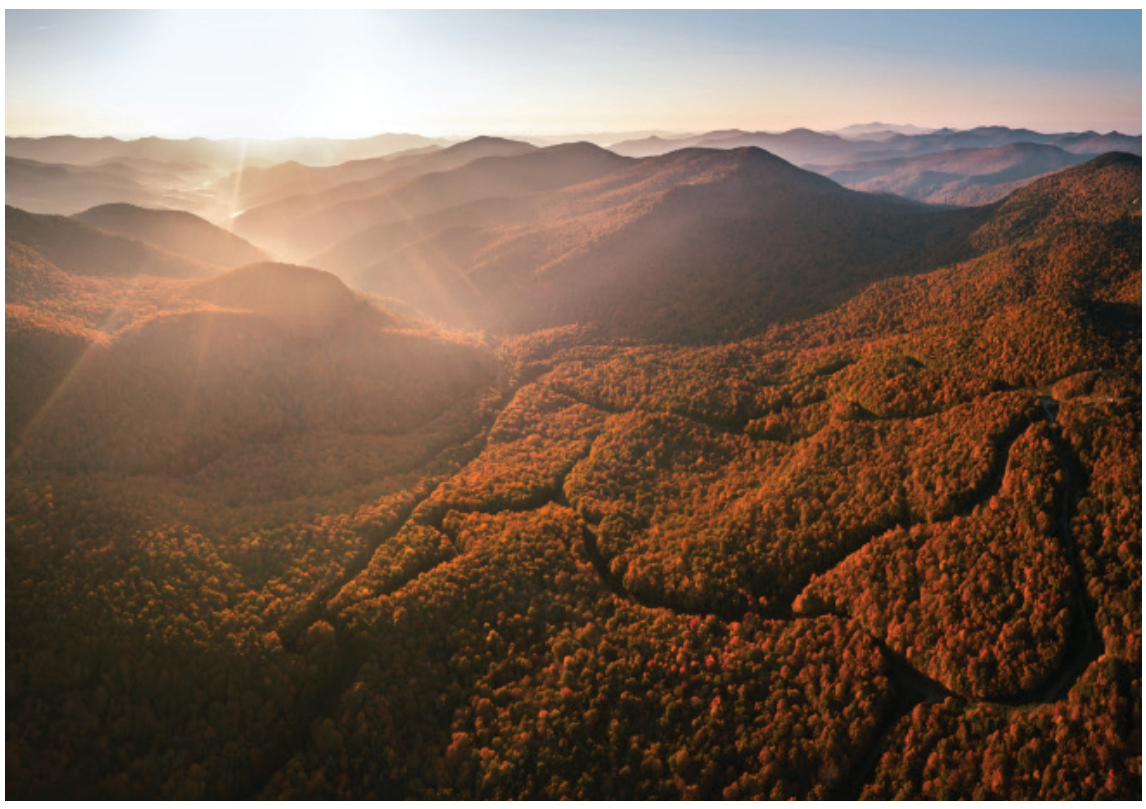
Within a 30-minute drive from campus, there are a variety of waterfalls, lakes, hiking trails and scenic viewpoints. Within an hour, there are many more. And within an hour and a half, you may find yourself among some of the northeastern United States' most enchanting views. The Green Mountains to the east, the Adirondacks to the west, and the numerous swimming holes sprinkled in between offer endless outdoor recreation opportunities for Middlebury students.

While opportunities for outdoor recreation exist year-round in Vermont, autumn brings about a special aura in the landscape. New England, and Vermont in particular, boasts some of the most beautiful foliage in the country, drawing millions of visitors each year. What many people travel across the country to see, we have right at our fingertips.

Take it from two seniors — your Middlebury experience will pass you by quickly. During our first three years, we failed to take full advantage of all that autumn has to offer. Now, as we're in the midst of our last fall in Vermont as college students, we finally prioritized capturing the fleeting foliage that surrounds us. And we didn't have to travel very far.

The scenes of leaves turning from deep greens to various flavors of orange around the Middlebury campus may feel sufficiently fulfilling. Admittedly, the views out to the west towards the Adirondacks from Bihall or to the east towards the Green Mountains from the rear windows of Davis are stunning during peak foliage.

Just minutes beyond campus,



The Middlebury College Snowbowl at sunrise from above. SAM ROUBIN

however, there are endless opportunities not only to see the foliage but to immerse yourself in it.

This semester, unlike my previous semesters at Middlebury, I, Sam, have spent many early mornings chasing quintessential autumn moments

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Middlebury alumnus Craig Thompson launches podcast to democratize the access to coaching experience

COURTESY PHOTO

Craig Thompson '13.5, founder of the "Breaking into Finance" podcast.

By JESSICA LI
Staff Writer

Middlebury alumnus Craig Thompson '13.5 wants students and young professionals to have access to free, high quality technical training resources to help them enter the finance industry.

That's why he started his podcast "Breaking into Finance" last June, which features two Middlebury students with no previous financial knowledge.

The podcast has released 40 episodes so far, covering authentic finance technical coaching sessions with Olivia O'Reilly '25 and Blaise Seifer '23.5, as well as mock interviews with students from other schools and majors preparing for and seeking jobs in the finance industry.

Thompson currently works as the CEO of Prophet Models, a venture-backed financial modeling software company he co-founded, and as president of Thompson Advisors, which provides financial expertise to lower middle market companies. He previously worked in investment banking at Goldman Sachs and in private equity funds at Kohlberg Kravis Roberts & Co.

Thompson also created the Wharton Partners in Equity Case Competition and helped design Wall Street Oasis' Private Equity Deals Process online training course.

After conducting over a hundred coaching sessions with undergraduate students seeking to work in investment banking, Thompson found that the number of coaching calls candidates receive is the strongest predictor of their success in attaining a job. Interview performance greatly depends on the candidate's ability to master financial technicals and industry jargon, according to Thompson, skills honed through practice with professionals familiar with the field.

"If you think the SAT and standardized tests are biased towards students from affluent backgrounds, just wait until you see the job market," Thompson wrote in an email to The Campus. "Nobody – nobody – gets a job in finance without some kind of help. Whether it's alumni, faculty, or parents/family, you need to learn the language from somebody."

"I want to democratize the access to this level of coaching, so that the people who really are the best and brightest, irrespective of their background and their network, can stand out and get the job," he wrote.

Using two Middlebury students with no prior financial knowledge as podcast co-hosts is a key part of this mission.

Siefer, a sociology major interested in the finance industry, believes that he and O'Reilly's initial lack of financial knowledge mirrors the potential audience of the podcast and better resonate with them. Listeners can learn alongside the co-hosts, starting from scratch and gradually acquiring technical knowledge as the episodes progress.

O'Reilly, a psychology major, has found that her involvement as a co-host of the podcast has significantly helped her in understanding and applying the technical concepts that she was previously unfamiliar with and preparing her for future job interviews.

"Even though some concepts were difficult to grasp at first, it was so satisfying, kind of like a top of the mountain moment, when I was able to correctly and confidently grasp the concept and answer the questions that Craig was asking," she wrote in an email to The Campus.

"Breaking Into Finance" will continue to be available on Apple Podcasts and Spotify.

"Right now I try to post new content twice a week, and I've experimented with new ideas like posting mock interviews with real students, but I really don't know what the future holds in terms of content," Thompson wrote. "But one thing I do know is that I will never charge a fee for subscriptions or anything like that. Creating a paid premium layer is directly counter to my mission, so I guarantee that Breaking Into Finance content will always be free to students."

FIRST-YEAR SEMINAR EXPLORES HISTORY THROUGH GRAPHIC NOVELS

By COLE CHAUDHARI
Copy Editor

Professor of History and Department Chair Rebecca Bennette has introduced an unconventional twist this fall to the standard First-Year Seminar with her course, "History, Representation, and the Graphic Novel." Funded by the college's Public Humanities Lab Initiative, Bennette's class aims to use the unique graphic novel format as an innovative approach to increase the accessibility of history for students and prove the continued value of history in the modern world.

"I think we are in a very particular moment now, with really trying to show how the humanities are relevant, and how they go beyond the walls of academia. A lot of the research we do as historians has to ensure that these historical topics are accessible, and that these topics have value," Bennette told The Campus.

In order to properly prepare herself to teach about graphic novels, Bennette attended graphic novel workshops, academic presentations about graphic novels and even took courses in drawing and cartoon illustration leading up to this fall semester.

"In many ways, this was a reflection of my motto throughout college and graduate school: 'Just keep trying,'" Bennette said. She explained that when she took a history course at Johns Hopkins University that was outside her original chemistry major, she switched her major because she discovered that history is not always the rote memorization or recitation of facts upon which high school history classes tend to rely.

"This idea of facts and memorization is just not what real history is about at all," she said.

After completing her undergraduate degree and applying for a wide array of post-graduate programs — ten law schools, a position as an English teacher in Japan and five doctorate programs in history — Bennette was preparing to enroll in the University of Chicago Law School when she received an interesting letter from Harvard University. Harvard offered for Bennette to visit the campus to explore the university's history department and meet with the colleagues Bennette would work with if she was to accept a spot as a PhD candidate.

Bennette enrolled in the Harvard program, excited by its flexibility and opportunities it provided.

"Let's just try it out," she said of her thought process at the time, a mantra that would carry her all the way to a tenured position in the History department at Middlebury.

That mantra would also encourage her to create a First-Year Seminar in which history was explored through the study of graphic novels, a medium sometimes conventionally seen as inadequately equipped to teach, explore and contend with weighty topics.

Bennette, whose research focuses on German history, found a solid foundation for the course in Maus, by Art Spiegelman, the graphic novel that legitimized the potential for serious historical content to be expressed through cartoons and art, she said.

The 296-page Pulitzer Prize-winning work depicts the experiences of Polish Jews during the Holocaust, and is one of the graphic novels on the syllabus for Bennette's First-Year Seminar course.

"I also browse graphic novels when purchasing them for my daughter, and I noticed that in the last several years, many graphic novels have been devoted to dealing with atrocities," Bennette said. "What is really interesting is the question of why people who are not graphic novelists by trade choose this medium?"

Logan Wang '27, a student in Bennete's First-Year Seminar, said he appreciates the innovation in using graphic novels and illustrations rather than traditional academic articles.

"The graphic novels are less daunting, and allow greater accessibility to the general public," Wang said. "For those of us who are visual learners, like me, you struggle with the wall of text. The graphic novels are easier to visualize, but that does allow the author to have a great amount of power by dictating what you see."

Brooke O'Toole '27, also enrolled in Bennette's First-Year Seminar this fall, similarly found the use of graphic novels in the class to be uniquely enriching, noting how the boundaries of historical study are expanded when stories take the artistic and visual forms of graphic novels.

"Looking at history through the lens of a graphic novel adds another dimension, specifically pertaining to empathy and how connected we feel to the stories that we are discussing," O'Toole said. "I think Professor Bennette does a really good job of making us think critically about what we are reading."

Recently in the course, groups of students had to complete their own graphic panels representing a chosen scene from a historical atrocity.

"Making our own comic panels forces us to delve deep into an issue and find ways of expressing our own visual metaphors and interdisciplinary connections," O'Toole said.

Professor of History and First Year Seminar Director Amy Morsman commended Bennette's innovative approach to teaching history, and spoke with The Campus about the importance of finding and implementing new, engaging methods of historical pedagogy.

"The study of history is about human drama, and trying to get our hands on artifacts of the past that tell stories," Morsman said. "Using graphic novels is inventive and creative and emphasizes the human drama of history. I am all for it."

Morsman explained that as First Year Seminar Director, she is always seeking new pedagogical approaches and methods to reach first-years as they begin their academic life at Middlebury. Bennette's course, Morsman said, pushes these students to think about writing and college-level work in new, surprising ways.

"I think it will give the students pause about what writing is, and what it looks like at the college level. I can imagine that she is having some interesting conversations with the students — not only about history and the content of history, but about how we do research and how we understand it and how we write about it," Morsman added.

COURTESY PHOTO

A selection of graphic novels depicting historical tragedies, some of which are included in the syllabus for Bennette's First-Year Seminar.

Professor of Economics Caitlin Myers maps abortion access across the U.S.

COURTESY PHOTO

Professor of Economics Caitlin Myers has received national coverage for her research following court rulings on abortion access.

By LEXI LINAFELTER
Sports Editor

Middlebury John G. McCullough Professor of Economics Caitlin Myers and her team of 30 student research assistants have gathered a variety of data about abortion access in the United States. The information the team collected — ranging from the number of open facilities to the average distance Americans have to travel to access abortions — has helped inform choices made by policymakers, national news organizations and individuals about abortion access.

There are currently 757 open abortion facilities in the U.S. — 39 fewer than there were on March 1, 2022. 616 of 709 surveyed facilities have availability within two weeks. For pregnant people in Texas, the average time to drive to a facility that provides abortions is currently 7.3 hours. This is only a glimpse of the critical economic findings of Myers and her team in contribution to the ongoing study of and conversation surrounding abortion access.

When Myers is not teaching regression analysis or statistics at Middlebury, she engages with these issues in real-world contexts, gaining extensive experience as an expert witness and consultant for Planned Parenthood and the Center for Reproductive Rights. Additionally, Myers wrote the economists' amicus brief submitted to the U.S. Supreme Court in Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health, the 2022 case that overturned Roe v. Wade.

The 2022 Dobbs decision elevated abortion accessibility to one of the most politically tumultuous issues in the news today. However, Myers has been quantifying the implications of abortion policy since she began compiling regional data in 2013, and has since become a trusted source for major news outlets to convey the impact of restrictive reproductive policy to their audiences.

"Whatever you think about abortion, these are questions that economists can answer," Myers said.

Myers was forced to act quickly and creatively to ensure that her data is accessible to those trying to understand the impact of thwese recent court rulings on their personal access to abortion. Myers' abortion access dashboard has given her a platform to publish data that visually illustrates the causal effects of limiting access to reproductive care in the United States.

"I hope, and like to think, that many people in the US want to understand how restricting abortion affects people," Myers told The Campus. "The economic literature on the subject overwhelmingly points to large causal effects of abortion access on women's economic lives; that doesn't answer every question about abortion, but if we're going to have a policy debate, let's at least understand the ways in which it matters."

As opposed to publishing a peer-reviewed paper, which could take up to months or even years to publish and be made accessible to the public, the abortion access dashboard provides a vehicle for Myers to share replicable, timely data that is useful to policymakers and the public alike. Robust data compiling average driving distances to abortion-providing facilities, appointment availability and changes in the number of facilities in every state is available for public access and media publication.

Prior to the Dobbs decision, Myers' research was primarily used in academic research. It has only been since June 2022 that the surge of media interest in Myers' research has exploded. Seeing how the overturning of Roe v. Wade has impacted the lives of Americans across the aisle, a myriad of major news outlets, including the New York Times, Time, the Washington Post and NPR have referenced her findings in their reporting.

Recently, Myers has been conducting research that isolates and measures the impacts of abortion restrictions, including possible future changes in medication abortion access, on abortion and birth rates.

The summer 2023 ruling in the 5th Circuit Court of Appeals in New Orleans restricting the use of mifepristone — the pill prescribed for medical abortions — posed a question that Myers' research, and her team of research assistants at Middlebury, were exceptionally well suited to answer: If the Supreme Court hears this case and upholds the decision, further constraining abortion access, how will access to abortions change for the women most vulnerable to these restrictive policies?

"This could ultimately be a cataclysm for U.S. abortion access, or it might be nothing," Myers said in an interview with Time magazine in August 2023.

While the turbulence of the ideological brawl in policy and judiciary spaces over abortion access varies across the country, Myers and her band of Middlebury research assistants and other researchers continue to collect data aimed at answering the most pressing questions of the national debate on abortion.

Center for Health and Wellness hosts weekly open visits with therapy dogs

COURTESY PHOTO

Therapy dogs and their owners, Stella and Sarah Lawrence (left) and Milo and Kathleen Parent (right).

By SUSANNA SCHATZ
Senior News Editor

Since certified therapy dogs Milo and Stella joined Middlebury's Health and wellness program in 2022, the Center for Health and Wellness has been hosting open sessions with their two therapy dogs every Tuesday in an effort to boost students' moods and bring joy to campus.

"We are so grateful to have the welcoming community at Middlebury for Stella to feel at home," Sarah Lawrence, associate director of the Center for Health and Wellness and Stella's owner wrote in an email to The Campus. "She and I also gain so much from having the love that students give to her, and I also deeply enjoy seeing her build connections with students."

Milo began his open visits in March 2022. They are held in and around McCullough Student Center because of its central location on campus, utilizing the foyer outside of the Grille during the colder months and holding the visits outside in the early fall and late spring.

According to Lawrence, she had been looking to include a dog in her therapeutic practice for a long time and was finally able to have her dog Stella certified in April 2022. The process for obtaining certification had to be initiated by a staff member, and for Stella it involved tests of trustworthiness, a letter from her veterinarian, and a letter from Lawrence explaining why she wanted to get Stella certified, according to The Campus' reporting on the therapy dogs last fall. Stella joined Middlebury's therapy dog team in September 2022.

Kathleen Parent, a budget analyst in the Office of Academic Affairs, is Milo's owner. Though Parent is not part of Middlebury's Center for Health and Wellness, she has found a passion in sharing her furry friend with the Middlebury community.

"Milo has grown up on campus, he has been coming to work with me since he was 4 months old," Parent wrote in an email to The Campus. "I get asked a lot why I decided to do therapy work with Milo, and it's really that Milo loves to be loved!"

Parent noted how excited students were to interact with Milo when they saw him around campus, and it was because of this reaction that she was eager to have him certified as a therapy dog. In addition to the weekly visits, Stella and Milo also participate in other special events in the Health and Wellness office, including the Halloween and Valentine's Day events.

Whether students miss their pets at home or simply want to connect with an animal, Lawrence has noticed the benefits students get from spending time with Stella, both at the weekly open visits and in her one-on-one counseling sessions.

"I see the benefit that having her brings to students who might be struggling. Sometimes it is difficult to verbally process emotional challenges, and having Stella there can bring so much soothing and calm in those moments," Lawrence wrote.

According to a study published on Taylor & Francis Online, college students experience elevated levels of psychological distress, but brief interactions with dogs significantly reduce anxiety and improve mood.

A number of studies have conducted specifically on the impact of interactions with animals on college students' mental health have found that there are clear benefits to these interactions for students. According to a PubMed article, "even a short 20 min session with a therapy dog can be an effective alternative intervention to improve student well-being, anxiety, and mood." The study suggested that animal-assisted interventions, activities and visitation programs can be utilized on college campuses to improve students' mood and overall well-being.

This Friday, Oct. 27, Milo and Stella will have their own trick or treating station at the Health and Wellness Education office downstairs in Ross from 2:30–4 p.m. The Tuesday open visits will continue through the end of the semester, and the Center for Health and Wellness plans to schedule these visits during J-Term and the spring semester, as well.

"We welcome all students to drop by from 4-5 on Tuesdays!" Lawrence wrote.

MIDDLEBURY COMMUNITY RESPONDS TO ISRAEL-PALESTINE CONFLICT WITH VIGIL, EDUCATION EFFORTS

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Glucksman referenced the Holocaust as well, but maintained that it should not be connected to the present war between Israel and Palestine. "One concern I had with the vigil's messaging was the way that it linked these atrocities and violence of the past two weeks with the Holocaust and other histories of Jewish suffering," he said. "I actually think that this instance of Jewish death needs to be seen in the context of 75 years of oppression in the name of Judaism."

Harry Griff '26 was among the attendees at the vigil. "I think what's important for people to not do is dehumanize what is going on," Griff wrote in an email to The Campus. "When it comes down to it, these are people, many around our age, who will bear the consequences of their parents' actions. I saw people on social media criticizing the vigil for many different reasons, which frustrated me because at its core, it was a place for mourning and community. There shouldn't be anything political about that."

Rabbi Stillman described the vigil as having done what the organizers hoped it would. "It provided a space of support and just a space to express grief, – not just for the Jewish lives that were lost but for all the innocent Palestinian lives as well." she said.

The college has maintained its policy of supporting requests to organize events such as vigils, protests or providing education materials via tabling. SJP requested to set up tables outside of the dining halls, and has done so for the past few weeks, Orten wrote. The members have held signs linking to go/Gaza, with external links to education about the ongoing conflict.

Middlebury students can also expect more events in the coming weeks. The Scott Center Conflict Transformation Collaborative is putting together a dinner with small-group facilitated discussions, according to Orten.

KATIE FUTTERMAN / THE MIDDLEBURY CAMPUS

Middlebury SJP created a list of educational resources that can be accessed at go/gaza.

RISING HOMELESSNESS IN MIDDLEBURY PROMPTS COMMUNITY RESPONSE

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now seeking housing in Addison County shelters, according to Lacey's statements at a recent Middlebury selectboard meeting.

At the most recent Town of Middlebury selectboard meeting on Oct. 10, a number of business owners, leaders of housing and social work organizations spoke on homelessness in Middlebury.

Lacey said that organizations providing mental health support and food are going out and responding to homeless individuals frequently. Providers such as Charter House have a current schedule of street outreach five to six days a week.

This street outreach allows social services to learn about homeless individuals' backgrounds and needs, as well as to build trust between them, Lacey said. Outreach can help advocates understand if an individual does not want to be in a shelter or if they are using available resources, and it gives them a chance to deliver bags of "essentials" to the unhoused, according to Addison Independent reporting.

Another key point of discussion at the October selectboard meeting was recent acts of vandalism in Middlebury, which have largely been due to one woman. Middlebury Police Chief Jason Covey and Lacey stressed the distinction between the encampment under the bridge and the vandalism. "Just like us, they just want to be safe, and they don't want to be seen as vandals or criminals," she said.

The woman's acts of vandalism have included smashing windows and damaging cars, as town residents described at the meeting. She is not welcome by the community under the bridge, many of whom have been there for a longer period of time and predate the incidents of vandalism.

The woman has had 78 involvements with Vermont law enforcement thus far in 2023. Twenty-two of those interactions took place within a three-week period ending on Oct. 10. In each of the seven times she has been arrested by the Middlebury Police Department, a judge has ordered her to be released, Covey said in the meeting.

None of the incidents involving this woman fall into the categories of crimes that can set bail, according to Eva Vekos, the Addison County state's attorney. Vekos said the woman could receive up to two years in jail if convicted, but that the attorney has requested a competency evaluation and it may be determined that she is suffering a mental illness, which would prevent her from going to trial.

Some downtown businesses expressed worry about the effects of vandalism on the local economy, particularly after other recent disruptions caused by construction and the Covid-19 pandemic.

A window and car in the parking lot at Haymaker Bun Company in downtown Middlebury were shattered recently.

"The uptick in crime and homelessness aren't necessarily connected," Caroline Corrente, owner of Haymaker Bun Company told The Campus. "People are lumping those together, and it's not necessarily the same thing."

Corrente said she wants Middlebury residents to continue coming to local businesses, while also taking the vandalism as seriously as if it were their own front door being smashed. Recognizing that long-term solutions are necessary, Corrente also suggested a town monetary fund to support businesses navigating the impacts of this vandalism in the short term.

Several individuals have occupied the area under the Cross Street Bridge from morning to dark for a year or two but did not cause any serious problems, Rick Buck, owner of Mister Up's Restaurant & Pub, located next to the bridge, said at the select board meeting. Buck stated that more people are now occupying this area by the river, and living there for 24 hours a day, instead of just during daylight hours, which are recent developments that are negatively impacting his business, as well as the safety of customers and employees.

The Addison Independent visited the encampment on Oct. 9 and spoke with a man living there who identified himself as Kenneth. Kenneth said he has been living under the bridge on and off for two years, and lamented the lack of affordable housing in the area. He also said that most of his fellow campers were good people who reject violence and vandalism — "We are people; we are human beings," Kenneth told the Addison Independent.

The police department has received 24 calls relating to the encampment under the bridge since May 1, Covey said at the selectboard meeting. The department has not made any arrests from those calls, however, as the encampment is on public property, so the campers have a constitutional right to be there, Covey added.

Organizations in Middlebury and Addison County more broadly aimed at meeting the needs of the unhoused include the Charter House Coalition, Helping Overcome Poverty's Effects (H.O.P.E.), Turning Point Center of Addison County, Champlain Valley Office of Economic Opportunity, United Way of Addison County and Counseling Services of Addison County (CSAC).

According to Rachel Lee Cummings, executive director of CSAC, "we are working to ensure people have more low-barrier access to services." A major provider of mental health services in Addison County, CSAC has recently expanded Interlude, its peer-run urgent care initiative, as well as rapid access to its Adult Mental Health program. Cummings added that the organization plans to roll out Mobile Crisis services in the next year.

"More mental health and SUD [substance use disorder] recovery services are needed across the population, regardless of housing status," Cummings wrote. "It's common for homelessness to be associated with mental health challenges, and service providers like CSAC play a crucial role in addressing the mental health needs of both housed and homeless individuals."

Another organization working to address homelessness in the area is Addison Housing Works — a non-profit that operates over 750 units of permanently affordable housing in Addison County.

CSAC and Addison Housing Works are both a part of the Addison County Housing Coalition, which aims to coordinate services and push for policies to bring more affordable housing to homeless populations, while also working to avoid stigmatizing these vulnerable populations, Cumings said.

According to Elise Shanbacker, executive director of Addison Housing Works, the coalition is working closely with the town of Middlebury and the police department to offer services to unhoused people in the area. "There are also groups that meet weekly and monthly for case management and conferencing, service coordination, and to strategize around advocacy and policy that will bring more affordable housing and services to our community," Shanbacker wrote in an email to The Campus.

Addison Housing Works recently opened 20 affordable apartments in Bristol, Vt., four of which are now occupied by formerly unhoused individuals and families. "We are striving to develop more permanently affordable apartments while also managing and maintaining the resources we have," Shanbacker wrote.

Shanbacker and Cummings both emphasized that unaffordable housing is the largest driver of homelessness in the Middlebury area. "We can support more housing in our communities through zoning and with targeted investments in nonprofit housing organizations," Shanbacker wrote.

The Better Middlebury Partnership, a civic organization focused on supporting local businesses in Middlebury, is currently a part of the Middlebury Homelessness Task Force. Alongside the Middlebury Police Department and social services, they collected impact statements from businesses about homelessness in town to send to representatives in Montpelier as well as the State Attorney's Office, the Middlebury town manager, and select board members, executive director Karen Duguay wrote in an email to The Campus.

"Recently the [Better Middlebury Partnership] has had to support businesses through a recent uptick in vandalism, break-ins and public safety concerns so our role within this discussion is to represent the business' voices and work to continue to preserve our community's economic vibrancy and public safety," Duguay wrote. "It makes sense that all of us work together to ensure that Middlebury is a safe and economically healthy place where all of our community members have access to resources.

The Middlebury Police Department also upped their presence downtown in response to business requests, Covey said at the selectboard meeting.

Homelessness is an issue nationwide, but is especially prevalent in Vermont. According to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Vermont has the second highest per-capita rate of homelessness in the country. The department of housing and urban development estimates that 43.1 out of every 10,000 Vermonters are unhoused.

Duguay and other Middlebury residents involved with the recently reinvigorated Homelessness Task Force stressed that the town remains committed to helping the homeless.

Sunrise Orchards seeks to incorporate sustainability into orchard operations

By KATRINA SCHWARZ
Contributing Writer

Apple orchards and renewability: two things for which Vermont is famous. Once fall rolls around, every Vermonter worth their Blundstones feels the draw towards stunning foliage, apple cider and pumpkin patches. These pieces of the puzzle combine at Sunrise Orchards in Cornwall, Vt., a business run by Barney Hodges '91.

Hodges began his journey to owning the orchard on an unconventional path. A geology major at Middlebury, and Hodges did not originally see himself where he is today. After college, he took a job as a geologist following a stint pursuing cross-country skiing. However, he couldn't resist the pull of living off of the land originally acquired by his parents and took over the business fully in 2010.

"I realized the opportunity that was here, the opportunity of being able to work a piece of property, a large piece of land with a vision," Hodges told The Campus.

He is fascinated with more than just the farming involved in owning an orchard. He also enjoys the challenge of running a business that is not always predictable — tackling issues that might arise with creative solutions. The hardest part about owning and running land can double as the most rewarding and fruitful pieces. Recently, the orchard has added a bakery, farmstand and cidery, all ideas that have hatched out of a difficult financial period during the Covid-19 pandemic. The goal is to employ diverse solutions in order to drive business forward and create more opportunities for growth.

"My favorite part is also our biggest challenge, which is remaining nimble and being able to come up with new business ideas of how to economically sustain this family business, " Hodges explained. "I think what I like most is being able to feed off of my entrepreneurial desires of being in business."

Sunrise Orchard is 100% solar-powered and utilizes environmentally friendly pesticides.

The orchard's website explains part of their mission and commitment to being environmentally conscientious — "At Sunrise Orchards we prioritize the health of our soils, waterways, and workers, and encourage beneficial insect species in the control of pests. We gather information about our trees, specifically the insects and fungi that live on the leaves and how the weather interacts with these populations…. We are stewards of this land and put a priority on working with the wild inhabitants of our orchards!"

It is important to acknowledge that people's tenure on land is limited and they should make an effort to raise food as carefully as possible, Hodges said. Since the late 1990s, Sunrise Orchard has utilized more gentle pesticides than many other commercial farms and orchards. The orchard's solar panels are a reflection of Hodges and his wife's beliefs, as well as being economically beneficial. The orchard itself is maintained by the on-site panels, but Sunrise Orchards also co-owns additional panels in Shoreham, Vt. These panels provide power for their commercial warehouse, where they store their own apples as well as products for other businesses.

Hodges credits Vermont with the orchard's ability to garner power from solar energy. "The approach the state of Vermont has taken to encourage investment in solar is the primary reason we were able to do that. It makes economic sense to do it, so we did it," he said.

Hodges added that one of his favorite parts about owning and running an orchard business is the involvement of the Middlebury community, and he enjoys when students can connect with the business. Recently, an economics class visited the orchard in order to learn more about the business aspects of the farm, an opportunity beneficial for both students and the orchard.

"Having professors get students to engage with the community is really important and often was missed when I was at Middlebury," Hodges said.

COURTESY OF SUNRISE ORCHARDS

Sunrise Orchards is open 9 a.m.-5 p.m. daily until Oct. 29.

Sunrise Orchard serves as a place of employment for Middlebury alumni, as it continues to draw Middlebury students even after their time at the college. For any Middlebury student aspiring to explore the world of farming, Sunrise Orchards could be a starting point. For those looking to pick or buy apples, this fall season ends Oct. 29, and students can check the orchard's website for further details and information.

Middlebury's second Fall Festival and Car Show attracts Vermont residents

By MADELEINE KAPTEIN
Local Editor

When Sarah and her husband Ben Wood opened Otter Creek Bakery in Middlebury in 1986, Wood's car — a 1961 green VW Bug endearingly named "Pippin" — was their business' main delivery vehicle, fondly recognizable to many people in town at the time. Pippin's bright color and eye-catching flower spinner attached to its side separated it from the crowd of 75 antique cars lined up on Main Street for the second annual Middlebury Car Show and Fall Festival last weekend.

The Festival took place on Sunday, Oct. 15 from 10 a.m – 3 p.m. on Main Street and Triangle Park in downtown Middlebury and was jointly organized by the Better Middlebury Partnership and the Addison County Chamber of Commerce. Open and free to the public, the event included not only the featured cars but also over 50 vendors selling food and merchandise, live music, a silent auction, a raffle and activities for children.

MADELEINE KAPTEIN/THE MIDDLEBURY CAMPUS
The Middlebury Car Show.

Last year's inaugural Festival and Car Show received positive reviews from local businesses, attendees, vendors and car owners, encouraging the organizers to bring the event back again this year, according to Phil Summers, executive director of the Addison County Chamber of Commerce. The event's attendance rose from approximately 2,500 to 3,000 people from last year to this year, he wrote in an email to The Campus.

Participants in the car show registered in advance on a first-come, first-serve basis on the Addison County Chamber of Commerce website until the 75-car limit was reached. Each participant entered information for a sheet of paper with their name, hometown and their car's make and model to display on their dashboard during the show.

Viewers could make their way up Main Street to peruse the car selection and use the designated number on each sheet of paper to place a vote for a preferred winner under multiple categories: "Best of Show," "People's Choice" and "Best of Decade," allowing for one winner from each decade between the 1910s and 2010s.

While last Sunday was Wood's first time bringing Pippin to a car show, other participants were seasoned car show participants. Huntington, Vt. resident Daniel Steadman brought his black 1946 Special Deluxe Plymouth to the show both years. Steadman said that he fell in love with the car when he first saw it six years ago and has flaunted it at several car shows in Vermont and New York in the past three years with his brother, whose car neighbored his in the display row.

"The people you meet, the stories you hear and the comments you get make it worth it," Steadman told The Campus. Steadman said he often runs into the same people at multiple car shows and remembers previous conversations he had with them, sparking connections and friendships.

Addison, Vt. resident Dennis Benoit's 1956 Belair Chevrolet won the "Best of 50's" category at last year's car show and festival, his medal prize still hanging from his rear view mirror. According to Benoit, the best part of bringing his car to shows is letting people sit in it and touch it.

"It's an old car," Benoit said. "It's meant to be enjoyed."

Bruce Waterworth, a Rutland, Vt. resident originally from England, brought his red 1972 Lotus Europa with a picture of Queen Elizabeth taped to the passenger seat window and English flag-patterned carpeting on its front seat floor. The Lotus only comes out for special occasions like this show, according to Waterworth.

Waterworth was not alone in his car decoration pursuits. Two large stuffed cows sat in the backseat of one vehicle, and another had old Smith Indian Fire Pumps and vintage Vermont firefighter tools on display in the back. The show was an opportunity for creativity and for the owners to share what they find most interesting about their vintage cars, exchanging stories and relaying their vehicles' unique histories.

Townline Grill, The Rollin' Rooster and Chim Chimney Bakery all served out of food trucks, and small businesses sold rainbow ice, prints, clothing, popcorn cookies, jewelry and other goods from tented stands, reminiscent of Middlebury's Summer Market. Local rock band Sanctuary, as well as Vermont-based Ska and Reggae-inspired band Soulstice performed at the Middlebury Green Gazebo during the festival.

The festival's vintage sponsor was Painting With Purpose, a professional Burlington-based painting company that hosted a silent auction at the event for Adirondack chairs. Other sponsors included Berkshire Hathaway Homeservices, IPJ Real Estate and Silver Maple Construction.

In an interview with The Campus about last year's festival, executive director of the Better Middlebury Partnership Karen Duguay expressed hope that the Car Show and Fall Festival would bring new patrons to local businesses and economically stimulate the town. With attendees crowding around Otter Creek Bakery to line up for baked goods and outside Little Seed Coffee Roasters for hot drinks, the event provided extra support to the community for the second year in a row.

LIV, LOVE, LOCAL: HAYMAKER BUN COMPANY

Liv, Love, Local is a column highlighting local businesses of Vermont, especially cafés and restaurants in the Middlebury area. Through interviews with owners, I want to highlight the specific successes and challenges that come along with small business ownership in Vermont, the hard work owners and employees put into these businesses, and how these spots serve as places to build community and connection.

COURTESY OF HAYMAKER INSTAGRAM @*haymakerbuns*
Haymaker earned a semifinalist nomrination for a James Beard Foundataion Award for Outstanding Bakery last winter.

By OLIVIA MUELLER
News Editor

At 11:30 a.m. on a Thursday morning, Haymaker Bun Company owner Caroline Corrente stood at the large counter to the left of the bakery door rolling out apple cinnamon donuts. Corrente is constantly in motion: rolling, shaping and arranging dough on the tray, while also making the time for an interview with The Campus.

The mid-morning lunch rush has started to trickle in, building into a line down the length of the store.

Haymaker Bun Co., opened by Corrente in late 2018, has just emerged from its first summer not heavily impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic, and has spent recent months welcoming in a steady rotation of customers.

Following a semifinalist nomination for a James Beard Foundation Award for "Outstanding Bakery" in January of 2023, word has spread beyond Vermont about Haymaker's tucked-away spot by the Otter Creek River. Short of a Michelin Star — a rating which has not made its way to Vermont — the nomination is one of the largest honors a restaurant in the U.S can receive.

Corrente learned of the prestigious nomination via a congratulatory text from a friend. The nomination, which came without warning, is a testament to the consistently high standard of service Haymaker strives to provide.

"Someone must have come in and we had no idea," Corrente said. "I was just shocked."

Despite its recent successes, Haymaker has also weathered its share of damages this year, from basement flooding over the summer to property damage incurred during a particularly busy weekend on a Saturday in early October.

"It was supposed to be my day off, but obviously I was in here dealing with it," Corrente said of the property damage.

The damage to a window of the bakery came during a period when car windows and brake lights were being smashed in the nearby parking lot. "It's been challenging, because my staff feels scared to park their cars and come in in the dark and really early mornings," Corrente said.

While Corrente and her team have compassion for the mental health, addiction and other factors that have caused the instigator to repeatedly damage property in the community, the vandalism issue has been an unexpected wrinkle in the year with tangible consequences, she said.

"It doesn't feel good to feel nervous walking into your place of business," Corrente said.

Nonetheless, Haymaker's location in Middlebury on Bakery Lane by the Otter Creek River has been a dream for Corrente and husband and co-owner Matt Corrente '06 since they first opened. "Middlebury has been incredibly supportive," she said.

A UVM graduate and Burlington resident for over a decade, Corrente considers Middlebury a middle ground in terms of a location to run a business, noting that the town's location off of I-89 makes it more challenging to draw in customers but has made Middlebury a special place to raise a family and operate a business.

"I've just loved being in this town. And I love having the college here because I think it brings a little more culture and diversity," Corrente said.

Haymaker sources produce for its food from several local farms, including Golden Russet Farm in Shoreham, Vt. and Full Belly Farm in Hinesburg, Vt. Corrente feels lucky to have access to such quality produce and to have the opportunity to establish deep relationships with the farmers from which Haymaker buys produce. "One of my favorite parts about my job is cultivating those partnerships and relationships, because farmers are doing such hard and important work," Corrente said.

The unique bun flavors that Corrente and her team develop are sometimes directly inspired by available produce. "Sometimes it's like, oh, we have a ton of kale in the fridge," Corrente said. Other times, the name of the bun comes first. "I remember wanting to do something for Summertime Sadness," Corrente said, alluding to a seasonal bun with a nod to the song by singer Lana del Ray. Ultimately, she decided on an appropriately blue-tinged blueberry brioche.

Beyond buns, Corrente and her team, including chef James MacPherson, have been working to expand and diversify their seasonally rotating lunch menu. Matt Corrente has also been taking on a series of pasta dinner pop-ups as somewhat of a revival of The Arcadian, the Italian restaurant that the Correntes formerly operated alongside Haymaker in their Bakery Lane space.

Following The Arcadian's closure in September 2021, Matt pivoted to a non-restaurant job as business manager for the Addison Country Central School District. After settling into the role, Matt took advantage of his free time at night to start up monthly pop-ups with a pasta menu similar to previous Arcadian fare.

The 100–130 seats available for a given pasta dinner pop-up typically sell out in approximately 30 minutes, according to Caroline.

Haymaker has also been expanding its catering services and private events, a specialty of McPherson, who previously owned a catering business. It has also catered several events for college sports teams and academic departments at the college.

Haymaker now rents out its space in the evenings for private events and already has a few bookings for graduation parties.

Haymaker Buns are available outside of the bakery for purchase in stores across Vermont, such as the Acorn Food Hub and Middlebury Co-op, in frozen packs of four buns. Given space at Haymaker and staff constraints, the rollout of retail frozen buns has been gradual, but Corrente has been pleasantly surprised by the enthusiastic reception with which stores have met her pitches.

Balancing a number of different moving parts to manage going forward, Corrente's vision for 2024 is to continue to grow and balance all of Haymaker's offerings. "I'd love to add to my staff to be able to produce more, continue to grow our catering branch of the business, and then just keep slinging buns six days a week," Corrente said. "Continuing to hone in on the frozen sales and grow that."

Corrente's message to Middlebury students? Keep coming by. "We love having kids come down here, working and spending time here," Corrente said. Haymaker serves up buns, but its location tucked away, yet right in the heart of town makes it a perfect place to form connections and build community.

Poll of Midd students about the use of AI says…

Op-Ed

Brooke Clarke *is a member of the class of 2025.*

As a Sociology student at Middlebury, I have been interested in the multifaceted relationship between Artificial Intelligence and society ever since AI tools became a big part of my education.

I recently conducted a poll on my Instagram account among Middlebury students to assess their sense of Middlebury faculty's views on the use of AI tools in academic work. Almost 100 students responded to the poll. The question I posed was: "Is your professor flexible about tools being used in the academic setting?" Below are the responses to the question:

Very flexible = 14%
Depends on the assignment = 26%
Occasionally = 29%
Not at all = 31%

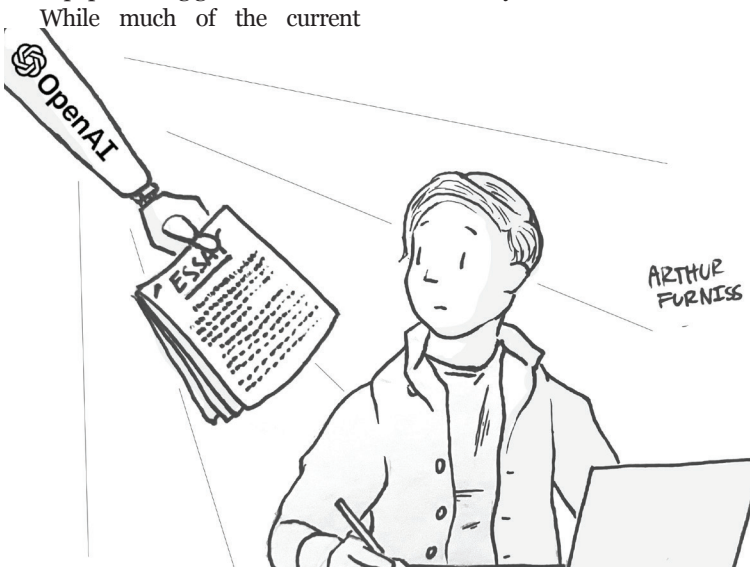
Surprisingly, the poll revealed that 69% of students surveyed reported that their professors are open to the use of AI tools in the academic context in one way or another. After completion of the poll, I spoke with several of the students who had participated. Those conversations provided more color to the data I collected. Many students were shocked to discover that some of their professors showed a high degree of enthusiasm when it came to integrating AI tools into coursework. One professor said they were open to using generative AI with some parameters, including providing the professor with advance notice of the intention to use generative AI, a discussion with the professor about how it will be used and disclosure of the use of generative AI on the work product as professors can be concern about ethics in the academic setting. Generative AI is software that uses algorithms to create new content such as text, music, images and video. The most popular generative AI product at this time is ChatGPT, which is available for free, and very easy to use.

Why is the discussion about AI at Middlebury important at this moment? Until November 2022, AI was the domain of tech geeks, and while most of us may have been passive users of AI through apps like Siri and Grammarly, the average person did not have the ability to create something of their own using AI. Integrating AI content became mainstream in the last 11 months through the introduction of ChatGPT, a large language model-based chatbot tool that is easily used by the masses. ChatGPT became the fastest-growing consumer software application in history, attracting its first 100 million users in just two months.

Because of the speed at which AI is entering our world and the large number of people using it, the technology raises many questions for our college community. Is a member of the administration allowed to write a report for the college president using generative AI? Can faculty develop a syllabus using generative AI? Can students write papers using generative AI?

While much of the current discussion that surrounds generative AI raises concerns about where to draw the line between one's own work and plagiarism, AI can also serve our college community in many positive ways. The New York Times reported that John Jay College lifted its graduation rate from 54% to 86% in just two years through its use of AI. The college used AI software to analyze all of its students and to identify those most likely to drop out based on slipping grades or failure to register for the courses required for graduation. The college then assigned academic advisors to focus on those students who were identified through AI, and the result was a dramatic increase in the graduation rate. At Middlebury, one can imagine the possibilities for AI's use to better support students and improve student outcomes.

I am very excited to see how we grow with AI at Middlebury. I plan to conduct a more detailed survey soon to gather more information from students' perspectives. In addition, I am in the process of forming a student organization, "AI and Society," to bridge the gap between students from the hard sciences and social sciences by providing an inclusive platform for collaboration and exploration. If you are interested in learning more about the club or talking to me about AI, email me at bclarke@middlebury.edu.



JOHNSON RENOVATION: A TRIUMPH

Op-Ed

Andy Rossmeissl *is a member of the class of 2005.*

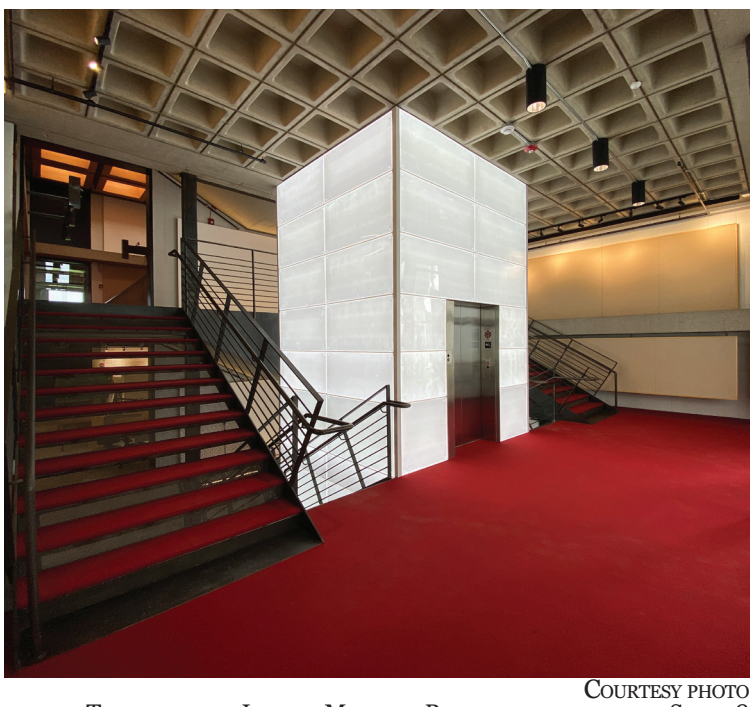
John McLeod and his team have achieved remarkable success with their expansion and renovation of the Christian A. Johnson Memorial Building.

In 2004, Carl Larson '03, Anne Callahan '03, Jon Coble '06, Buck Sleeper '05 and I organized Johnson Week, a symposium celebrating the building, headlined by an in-person tour and lecture by its architect, Jean-Paul Carlhian. Needless to say, until the grand reopening last month, we would have called ourselves the building's biggest fans.

It is now clear that honor goes to John McLeod, who managed to preserve and celebrate the building's most cherished spaces, materials and details, while gracefully improving its accessibility and functionality. He restored the grandeur of the Johnson gallery, brought aging studios back to life and even managed to heighten the drama of the entrance experience.

It will come as no surprise, if you have toured the building, to learn that McLeod did not parachute in for this commission. As a Middlebury architecture professor who has taught in these spaces for years — intimately aware of their glory and flaws alike — his drafting pencil deftly added practical function while sacrificing neither character nor spirit. Outdated equipment and infrastructure have been modernized without the sterilization typically inflicted on buildings of this era.

Most importantly, McLeod reinforced the building's primary purpose: to serve as a venue — and often canvas — for art to emerge. Generations of Johnson-dwellers have hung, applied, performed, filled, projected, situated and otherwise presented all forms of art on and in every surface and space under that skylighted roof. It is, ultimately, a nearly invulnerable shelter for artistic expression — or at least that's how we treated it.



COURTESY PHOTO
THE INTERIOR OF JOHNSON MEMORIAL BUILDING WAS UNVEILED ON SEPT. 28

COURTESY PHOTO
PROFESSOR PIETER BROUCKE CALLED MCLEOD'S RENOVATIONS TO JOHNSON AN "ADAPTIVE REUSE IN ARCHITECTURE."

McLeod clearly understood what many contemporary architects do not: that our greatest buildings create beautiful, functional space for humans to do great things rather than steal the limelight from them. The Johnson of the past, and even more so its masterful revision, is a monumental backdrop for monumental ideas. Nowhere is McLeod's commitment to this mission more evident than in the translucence of his sublime new lobby, which simultaneously embraces space for its residents and beckons passersby in to join.

Die-hard Johnson fans may miss the lumbering freight elevator, the mammoth sliding glass doors or the oddly luxurious bathrooms (none of which, frankly, ever seemed to work too well). But in return, McLeod has breathed new life into our beloved great hulking creature of a building, which will in turn shelter and showcase our humans and their great works for decades more to come. Bravo.

FREE EXPRESSION OVER CANCEL CULTURE

Op-Ed

Shane Silverman *is a member of the class of 2024.5.*

"At Middlebury, we are committed to educating students in the tradition of the liberal arts, which embodies a method of discourse… we emphasize reflection, discussion, and intensive interactions between students and faculty members," the "About Middlebury" page on the college website states.

Or so we claim. In practice, Middlebury is committed to upholding free expression and civil discourse insofar as it aligns with the dominant political beliefs of the institution, which leads to an experience that resembles indoctrination rather than education. In response to the discussion on the shortfalls of our intellectual culture brought up in the Editorial Board's piece, "Education over erasure," I offer a criticism against the illiberal academic culture found throughout Middlebury College that systemically denies us the promised tradition of discourse.

On the surface, Middlebury College, and elite higher education in general, stands as a bastion for our pluralist democracy, nurturing informed, free-thinking citizens who will one day offer positive contributions to civic life. As purported by Middlebury's mission statement, the ideal university creates an environment for student growth by guaranteeing open expression, encouraging the free exchange of ideas and accepting diverse viewpoints from across the ideological spectrum. Does this sound like the Middlebury experience to you?

I don't think so. At Middlebury, I see a toxic cancel culture that suppresses free expression to enforce an orthodox dogma through shout-downs, disinvitations and even physical violence, earning us the honor of ranking as the 15th worst college for free speech according to the Foundation for Individual Rights and Expression. The current cancel culture appropriates the logic from anti-racist arguments advocating for respectful speech to avoid questioning the status of marginalized groups. Thanks to students brave enough to bring change through public discourse, this line of reasoning produced admirable statements on inclusion and tangible policy gains we enjoy at Middlebury today. However, the argument for cancel culture on campus is inherently antithetical to the principles of diversity, equity and inclusion. Rather than working to uplift all voices in productive discourse, proponents of cancel culture exclude those with different beliefs, broadly claim their opponent's viewpoints are dangerous and pressure the school to support their ideology through censorship or endorsement.

The pressures of cancel culture can be felt throughout higher education. At Middlebury, administrators have expressed to me a lack of confidence in our collective ability to foster productive discourse and frustration with the difficulty of providing moral leadership in a partisan climate; it is no surprise that they choose to chart the most politically safe path forward even if it means stifling conversation. In the classroom and at public forums, professors avoid contentious discussion for fear of being doxxed by their students or sanctioned by the institution. Among students, we self-censor, avoid challenging discourse and conform to the dominant culture through politically 'safe' speech rather than take intellectual risks. In a community that claims to go to such great lengths to promote diversity, equity and inclusion, is it not ironic to find such vehement intolerance for and fear of open discourse? How can we claim to be "deeply committed to creating a diverse and welcoming community with full and equal participation for all individuals and groups" when so many of us are scared to express themselves? Are we to accept that membership in the Middlebury community is conditional on ideological conformity?

I don't think so. With the interest of our civic education in mind, I propose we as a community adamantly reject the logic of cancel culture and uphold the tenets of free discourse in all theaters of our lives, academic, professional and personal. To do so, we must recognize cancel culture as unproductive, intellectually weak and unjust. First, rather than producing meaningful contributions to important conversations, cancel culture degrades the university into a zero-sum ideological battle where the winner asserts their belief as orthodoxy. Second, resorting to personal attacks and censorship to silence viewpoints denies us the opportunity to develop the rhetorical skills necessary to challenge immoral or faulty arguments, leaving us woefully unprepared for civic life; certainly the ignorance cancel culture creates is more dangerous to our well-being than the discomfort of disagreement. And third, cancel culture undermines the purpose of a liberal arts education by holding us back from exploring the frontiers of knowledge and justice.

The role of the American higher education institution is to be an environment for respectful free discourse in the pursuit of knowledge and understanding, and all of us have a role to play in aspiring to this ideal. Administrators should set the tone for the campus, uphold free expression as a function of diversity, equity and inclusion and empower all members of the community to engage in open discourse in a politically neutral environment. Faculty are responsible for guiding thoughtful deliberation, introducing diverse viewpoints and helping students build the civic skills crucial for participation in a pluralistic democracy. And most importantly, students must be brave enough to think for and express ourselves, find spaces for discourse and take intellectual risks.

At Middlebury and many other universities across the nation, the threat of cancel culture enforces intellectual conformity and control of campus discourse. By appropriating the moral foundations of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion to justify exclusion and censorship, a vocal minority establishes their beliefs as the official political pedagogy of the institution. This process demeans the purpose of higher education and sets a dangerous precedent of debating through force, not deliberation. I am saddened to be part of an academic community that's received national scrutiny for hostility to speech, where the majority of students and faculty are constrained by orthodox beliefs and contentious discussion of our history is only allowed in a Vermont Superior Court. But, I am hopeful that compassion, reason and curiosity will prevail and Middlebury will uphold free expression as a component of diversity, equity and inclusion. Regardless of our political ideology, we should all reject the darkness of cancel culture and uphold the illuminating principles of free expression.

Sarah Says: I didn't like my semester abroad

Op-Ed

***Sarah Miller** is a member of the class of 2024 and an Editor at Large for The Campus.*

On a semi-weekly basis Sarah Miller shares her thoughts on culture and campus life

Content warning: this article contains mentions of physical violence.

The night after I was mugged, I clipped my chin on the Canal Street pavement.

We were heading home from one of our favorite pubs, slightly drunk, when one of my friends got the idea to give me a piggyback ride. Though I protested a little, these were new friends, study abroad friends, and I was still eager to make a good impression. So when my friend tripped, flinging me over her shoulders to stall her fall, I was not surprised that I hit the ground.

In the days to come, I would treasure the scab on my chin. Bright and ugly, it was a physical representation of a wound that had left me without visible scars.

At a school where over half of the junior class studies abroad, and studying abroad is the expectation, there can be immense pressure to put a good spin on your semester abroad.

If you asked me about my semester abroad, I would probably tell you I liked it. That I had never been to Europe, and I was so lucky to take advantage of the travel opportunities. I might mention my three and half weeks backpacking after my semester finished. And that, though the city was a little more provincial than I might otherwise prefer, it was a treat to study English at Trinity College Dublin, a country and a program which still values writers.

Then, depending on how well I knew you, I would mention the mugging. At first, among friends and friends of friends, it was my elephant that followed me into any room. Not talking about what everyone already knew seemed more transparent than any recounting I could offer.

But at some point, it became the only story I could tell.

I know I will always remember that night. I will not remember the knock to the ground (there are some memories from which the mind protects) but the moment I realized someone was rooting in the pockets of my jacket and a pale, unfamiliar face looked down at me as I screamed for him to "Just take it. Take it." I will remember how he broke off into the night. I will remember how the rush-hour crowd coalesced around me in aid as I screamed.

More than anything, I remember returning back to my apartment, bloodied and torn, and deciding whether or not to hug the roommate who had blown me off for lunch. I accepted the hug, mostly because not doing so seemed enormously awkward, but also because anyone who loved me was at least an ocean away. These roommates, these new study-abroad friends, were all I had.

While it's tempting to attribute my unhappiness abroad to my mugging, long before my feet touched ground on Irish soil I suspected study abroad would be difficult. I am an anxious person who settles into new environments slowly, let alone new countries. Since I do not study a language at Middlebury and wanted both the cultural rush of a European city and intense academics, I chose to study at Trinity, an external program without any other MiddKids.

By that February night of my mugging, I had lived in Dublin for exactly a month. While the ground under my feet was only beginning to settle, I knew the girls I spent my time with were only friends of circumstance, driven less by any font of real connection than a brutal instinct to survive the semester.

In the following weeks, I walked the Dublin streets in a daze, past crying, but still jumping at all manner of shadows. In my retelling of the experience, I tend to attribute my unhappiness to the crude facts of the crime. The trauma lends a comforting narrative neatness to my misery. But since somewhere between Barcelona and Lisbon those study abroad girls and I fell out, and that had everything to do with our inherent, inevitable incompatibilities rather than my police incident report.

Though my mugging looms over my semester, as resistant to extirpation as any stubborn weed, I still think many of the aspects of Dublin I disliked would remain. Even without a mugging, I would miss a competent metro system, mourn the apparent absence of spice and seasoning, feel lost in the massive, impersonal classes, loathe the degree of feces I skirted on my walk to school and rue the infamous Irish gloominess.

Maybe without the mugging, I would not be quite so bothered by my apartment's location — which some locals described to me as "the worst part of Dublin" — but I think under any circumstances it would have borne too close a resemblance to the rough neighborhoods of James Joyce's Dubliners for my liking.

Of course, there were good moments: the sweet fullness from a pint of Orchard Thieves, my awesome smallness before the Cliffs of Moher, the mist that hung above the island in a kind of magic before the plane touched down, how my neighborhood always smelled of the yeast from the nearby Guinness plant, so many nights with my voice raised in ebullient Irish song, the salt spray from Howth and Bray, how it felt to walk in the steps of so much history, and, most of all, my painful and glorious independence.

Abroad, I learned to care for myself alone. While at Middlebury I often sandwich my hours with different friends, in Dublin I learned to spend long stretches of time alone and enjoy my company.

I want to tell you I have drunk from the cup of life. That if I have been miserable at least it has been in the company of the clubs of Madrid and London, between the canals of Venice and the brisk waters of the Baltic Sea, and in the tradition of Ireland's greatest writers who, after all, left Ireland, even as they remained bound to the island.

I want to tell you how I learned independence in the pre-dawn light of foreign airports and countries I walked alone.

In short, I want to tell you that studying abroad was worth it.

At some level, my desire to determine my time abroad as a net positive experience stems from Middlebury's study abroad culture, but the impulse to avoid putting a bad face on an experience is just human.

Before I studied abroad, I often questioned if I was making the "right" decision. As a member of the class of 2024, my previous semesters were shaped by Covid-19 and if most of my friends were not also studying abroad I probably would have chosen to stay at Middlebury.

Yet my fall semester before going abroad was almost claustrophobic with restlessness. As I wandered home from parties and marathon sessions in Davis I felt stifled by so much sameness. My desire to be shaken up as forcefully as a snowglobe was so urgent that by the time the trees were heavy with December snow I was itching to leave even as I feared what lay before me.

We know instinctively that the purpose of life is not to avoid pain. That, in fact, our growth is most fostered by the times that challenge us most. Yet, understandably, we flinch not just from pain, but from confronting when we were in pain as if we can retroactively provide a salve.

So now when I talk about my semester abroad, I account for my hurt, my learning and my growth without attempting to balance the score.

And, I still encourage students to study abroad because I cannot imagine who I would be otherwise if I did not hop on that plane without knowing what came next.

POPPING THE MIDDLEBURY BUBBLE: WHAT PROSPECTIVE STUDENTS NEED TO KNOW

Editorial

The editorial represents the opinion of the Middlebury Campus Editorial Board.

With the Early Decision I deadline approaching on Nov. 1, we want to address this editorial to prospective students considering applying to make Middlebury as their home for the next four years. It is both an advantage and a privilege to apply early. Students are more likely to be accepted in the Early Decision rounds than in the Regular Decision round, but the contractual commitment to attend when applying this way often privileges those who can afford to visit campus or pay the $83,880 sticker price.

Logistical factors aside, in deciding whether to apply early to Middlebury, we urge you to keep in mind how the college functions like a bubble: with a small student body in a small town in a rural state, the college's insularity is both its best quality and a source of frustration.

Middlebury is a small school in a small town in a small state, and it feels like it. Because living and eating on campus is the norm, you can spend weeks at a time enjoying the same square mile, taking advantage of Middlebury's state-of-the-art athletic center, student concerts and comedy shows, and the student-run café, among other things. At Middlebury, you won't have the bustle of a city to distract you; you will be fully immersed in life on campus.

With under 10,000 residents, the town of Middlebury has everything you need — and nothing more. It has charming shops, a natural foods co-op and a movie theater; it does not have amenities like chain restaurants and stores found in larger college towns. You may have to drive to Burlington to find specialized medical services — if you can even find one there — and it is difficult for all Vermonters to access mental health services. If you are among the 50% of students who do not have a car at Middlebury, your newfound independence in college may feel limited by the need for a vehicle to get beyond the Middlebury bubble. The size, however, makes it easy to feel like part of the community through working jobs at businesses in town, or spending the summer in Middlebury.

Winters are not easy to get used to, especially if you hail from far away. As beautiful as the famous fall foliage currently is, the Vermont winters also live up to their infamous reputation, with freezing temperatures, constant snowfall and chilling winds that can put a serious damper on campus life from December to March. J-Term is a unique feature of the college to experiment with new, exciting classes for one month, but if you are not already an experienced skier, you may find your social life lacking during those four cold weeks.

Keep in mind, too, that most of your peers will be from New England — at least that is how it often feels. Over half of respondents to last year's Zeitgeist survey hailed from New England or the Mideast states. If you're from the West Coast or the South, people back home may not know what Middlebury is. The lack of easily accessible transportation can make staying on campus over weekends or breaks isolating when your New England friends are driving home in three hours.

One of the most notable negative aspects of Middlebury is its lack of diversity, in terms of both race and socioeconomic status. As of the fall of 2022, Middlebury's student body was 56% white, 32% "underrepresented minority" and 12% international. These numbers are staggeringly obvious when walking around campus or sitting in on a class. The lack of diversity also applies to socioeconomic status. In 2017, 23% of Middlebury students were from the top 1% of family incomes — a fact which is abundantly clear from the shoes people wear to the places they jet off to over break. Even as the diversity of the student body has increased in recent years, friend groups and social spaces at Middlebury tend to be racially and economically segregated. Life at Middlebury can look and feel at times like four more years at a New England prep school.

Middlebury's academic reputation is well-earned. You will be challenged, and you will learn a lot. Like other liberal arts colleges, Middlebury boasts small class sizes, and professors emphasize their teaching over their research. What is more, Middlebury doesn't have a reputation for academic ruthlessness the way that other elite liberal arts colleges might. While smart and engaged in what they are learning, the average Middlebury student is not spending their Saturday night doing homework — Davis Family Library closes at 5 p.m. on Saturdays — or trying to one-up each other with their grades. The "work hard play hard" reputation of Middlebury holds true. Although the party scene does not compare to a big state school, Middlebury students generally are eager to do something fun after putting in the hours studying.

Middlebury has suffered from a severe housing shortage in recent years. The college's larger than usual post-pandemic student body put a lot of stress on the housing infrastructure, resulting in the college housing upperclassmen at the Marriott Hotel and at the Breadloaf campus in the fall of 2021, purchasing the Inn on the Green in town, and paying students to take a semester off this fall. There are reasons to believe that the housing crisis is improving, however, and by the fall of 2025, freshmen can expect to live in a brand new dorm. Staffing shortages, due to the college's failure to adequately pay staff and a lack of available workers in small-town Vermont, have also been a source of frustration in recent years, leading to a lack of library staff and limited hours at dining halls, the student convenience store Midd Xpress, and the Grille restaurant.

You may have heard that NESCACs have a strong reputation for being inundated with athletes, and that the athletes and the non-athletes don't socialize together. There does exist some level of divide between these two groups, since 27% of Middlebury students are on varsity sports teams that can sometimes look like giant friend groups. However, Middlebury's slightly larger student body size of 2,500 students relative to similar liberal arts colleges (or more like 2,800 these days due to a recent trend of over-enrollment) is notably larger than other schools like Bowdoin, giving more room for non-athletes to create their own spaces and social groups.

All of these factors in mind, if Middlebury sounds like the place for you, go for it and apply early. We hope to see you here. If you need more time, think it over and submit your application through Regular Decision. No matter your decision, we hope you know that the Middlebury community is a special place where the people genuinely care about and look out for one another. And your ties to Middlebury do not end after you leave the bubble; you would soon join the ranks of Middlebury graduates who are always thrilled to meet and speak with current students. Wearing Middlebury merch in a city will almost guarantee a spontaneous, joyful encounter with a passing-by alum — and we wouldn't have it any other way.

The Middlebury Campus

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"ELEMENTAL: REIMAGINE WILDFIRE" LIGHTS A PATH TOWARD A RESILIENT FUTURE

ELI DIBARI
Contributing Writer

In a future in which the threat of wildfires shrouds the horizon in smoke and uncertainty, the film "Elemental: Reimagine Wildfire" (2022) offers a fresh perspective of hope.

The world is grappling with the repercussions of climate change and an expanding human footprint. The need for innovative solutions and a shift in our understanding of wildfires has never been more pressing. "Elemental" aims to uncover these solutions, reimagining the narrative of wildfires from one of despair to one of resilience and adaptation.

On Wednesday, Oct. 18, Middlebury students, faculty and community members gathered in Dana Auditorium to explore this complex world of wildfire through the film's lens.

Though required to attend for her Earth and Climate Sciences class, Chelsea Smith '23.5 was also curious to learn more about how wildfire and climate change go hand in hand.

"Changes in wildfire abundance and severity are quite clearly linked to human activity, and this film was another way for me to better understand our impact on the earth and what we can do to make a positive difference," Smith said.

As the film opened, the audience was immediately pulled into the flames. Harrowing point of view footage and emotional recounts from residents of Paradise, Calif., who lost their homes in the Camp Fire that scorched over 150,000 acres in 2018 set the stage for the wildfire crisis at hand. The darkening skies, wind-blown flames, audio from frantic 911 calls and radio chatter from overwhelmed firefighters made the fear and heat palpable in the seats of the auditorium.

This portrayal of the ways in which wildfire affects our society is one of the film's strengths — it gives voice to those who have been affected by the rapidly expanding fires across our country and brings their experience to people who have not felt wildfires' effects.

This narrative was balanced with a solutions-based approach that critiqued current strategies of fire management and pointed to ongoing wildfire research and generational ecological knowledge.

Fire researchers shared methods for forest management that limit carbon emissions and promote fire as a natural entity, approaches that shift away from logging practices like clearcuts and thinning and toward the use of prescribed burns. Insights from members of the Yurok tribe shed light on how fire can be used as a tool to stimulate new vegetation growth and balance ecological dynamics for the benefit of flora and fauna.

The film gave actionable advice for homeowners to protect their property, promoting the use of fire-proof building materials and the importance of creating defensible space between their house and the surrounding vegetation.

The success of "Elemental" can be traced to the expert voices that crafted its narrative. The cinematographic experience of director Tripp Jennings paired with the specialized knowledge of executive producer Ralph Bloemers created a well-balanced film that was both artful in its presentation and clear in its message.

After the screening of the film, both Jennings and Bloemers joined the audience via Zoom, along with Rick O'Rourke, a prominent voice in the film and member of the Cultural Fire Management Council, to discuss their work on the film over the past several years. Ryan Hughes, Forest Fire Management Officer for the Green Mountain and Finger Lakes National Forests, and Lauren Prinzing, an epidemiologist for the Vermont Department of Health Division of Environmental Health, participated in the panel in-person to contribute local perspectives. Facilitated by Geography Professor Joseph Holler, the panel offered more context and details about the film, related its themes to issues close to home in Vermont.

Mill Valley Film Festival
Wildlife Conservation Film Festival
The Valley Film Festival
LA Documentary Film Festival
Golden Gate International Film Festival
Colorado Environmental Film Festival
Greenpoint Film Festival
ELEMENTAL
REIMAGINE WILDFIRE
A FILM BY TRIP JENNINGS AND BALANCE MEDIA NARRATED BY DAVID OYELOWO EXECUTIVE PRODUCER RALPH BLOEMERS
PRODUCER EDITOR SARA QUINN SOUND TRACK NICK JAINA SUPPORTED BY NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC, PATAGONIA

COURTESY PHOTO

"Elemental: Reimagine Wildfire" screened at Middlebury last Wednesday.

Bloemers offered a call to action, asking attendees to consider what each of us can do to reshape our relationship with wildfire, shifting away from a reliance on politicians and big-decision makers toward initiatives like Community Wildfire Protection Plans. Along that theme, Jennings emphasized the open-mindedness needed to adopt the changes required for survival in a world with wildfire.

For O'Rourke, that starts with having conversations about wildfires at a young age, particularly in communities that lie in the wildland-urban interface, the zone of transition between human settlement and forest. He stated that this type of education will be essential to informing communities about the science behind wildfire management and how to be prepared when smoke fills the sky.

Focusing on Vermont forests specifically, Hughes underlined how we cannot control fire, stating that "nature is far better at taking care of itself than we people are." We instead must use it as a management tool to proactively maintain forest health and prevent large-scale, damaging fires. This sentiment contributed to his message that fire is a benefit to the landscape and that we as humans must view it as such.

Prinzing emphasized the relevance of her work as an epidemiologist to wildfires and outlined initiatives to help people when air quality deteriorates — particularly those with existing respiratory conditions and others who may not have access to indoor shelter with clean air. The solution, Prinzing said, will come from interagency collaboration at both the national and local levels.

When asked about her main takeaways from the evening, A.J. Rossbach '24, a member of the Middlebury Fire Department, appreciated the specific insights into wildfire in Vermont because most media tends to focus on wildfire in the west. With hopes of a career in fire management, Rossbach said that those local perspectives, as well as the research and knowledge presented in the film, provided her with information that will be useful in her future employment.

Walking away from the film, Smith expressed appreciation and a desire to take action and spread its message.

"This and similar media should be introduced everywhere. It can be to begin the educational process from state to state, city to city, no matter how close or distant from the area a fire hazard may seem to be," Smith said.

At its core, "Elemental: Reimagine Wildfire" asks all of us to invest in a sustainable future with wildfire, sparking a paradigm shift in how we perceive and address it, while offering hope and attainable solutions in the face of climate change.

Pianist Mahani Teave visits Middlebury from Rapa Nui

GUS MORRILL
Contributing Writer

Below the domed wooden ceiling and hanging golden light fixtures of the Robinson Concert Hall, Middleburians young and old gathered on Friday evening to see one of the most unconventional concert pianists of the modern era. Mahani Teave without a doubt has the resume to match any of her contemporaries. She attended prestigious music schools worldwide to hone her crafts and studied under several notable concert pianists, including Roberto Bravo, Sergei Babayan and Fabio Bidini.

Indeed her ability as a concert pianist was put on full display in front of the large crowd in attendance this past Friday. What truly sets Teave apart is a connection to her home island of Rapa Nui, also known as Easter Island, which is so strong that she put her budding career on hold to give back to it.

The pianist's artistry was unmistakable, seemingly lost in her own music as notes cascaded from the Steinway grand piano. The setlist began with an intricate yet lively fugue by Bach, followed by Chopin's "Nocturne in B-Flat Minor, Op. 9, No. 1," which concluded in a dark furor of notes. Teave continued with four other Chopin pieces, including the stormy intensity of "Scherzo No. 1 in B Minor, Op. 20."

The pianist then paid homage to her beloved home island, with a piano arrangement of the traditional Rapa Nui song "I hē a Hotumatu'a" and pieces from Alejandro Arevalo's "Suite Rapa Nui." While the former consisted of beautiful swelling arpeggios, the latter had moments of crashing magnitude and cascading notes. The highlight of the night, however, was Teave's rendition of Franz Liszt's "Ballade No. 2 in B Minor." The pianist's hands were a blur as a concatenation of rich melodies rose from the piano. Finally, the setlist concluded with two well-executed Sergei Rachmaninoff pieces.

"Teave is an unheralded master of her craft. Her performance was a demonstration of incredible emotional and technical range; almost effortlessly, she captured the intimacy of Chopin's Nocturnes and drama of Liszt's Ballade," Rohan Davies '27 said of the performance.

Teave grew up surrounded by music. In "Song of Rapa Nui," a documentary about Teave that was screened on campus on Thursday, Oct. 19, Teave mentions that everyone on Rapa Nui is a musician in some way. Fittingly, Teave's father was also a singer and songwriter.

When the island of less than 8,000 got its first piano, Teave was overjoyed that she could finally take an active role in her culture's musical legacy. At the young age of nine, she spent almost every day at the piano teacher's house, quickly mastering the fundamentals in her hours of practice. At this point, although Teave didn't have the acclaim that other talented prodigies might enjoy at her age, she possessed an unyielding resolve to get better.

Recognition of her efforts came in the form of a visit from Bravo. Teave had heard of the pianist's upcoming concert on Rapa Nui and asked him to listen to her play while he was there. Upon hearing her play, Bravo suggested that she leave the island to develop her skills. It was then that Teave's career truly gained momentum. She went on to develop her skills first at the Astral University of Chile and then at some of the world's most renowned music schools, including the Cleveland Institute of Music and the Hans Eisler School of Music in Berlin.

While in Germany, nightly concerts became a common occurrence for the pianist, which would eventually turn into tours across several continents. For many, this meteoric rise would have signaled the start of a new star-studded life. Yet Teave's mind never left Rapa Nui.

"You had all these opportunities. There are lots of other children who are waiting to have them too," Teave reflected while playing "Song of Rapa Nui."

Those children to which Teave referred began to receive the support they needed when Chilean benefactors donated two pianos to Rapa Nui, and Teave met with Rapa Nui native Enrique Icka to discuss how he could use his knowledge of sustainable architecture to benefit his home island.

In 2012, Teave helped found Toki Music School, offering free music lessons to inhabitants of the island and setting an example for recycled architecture. The building itself was built using recycled waste such as old tires, bottles, and cardboard, and a rain collection device was installed. Once the building was completed, Teave left behind her performing career to work for Toki full time.

Now, Teave is touring to raise awareness for her school and promote her album, "Rapa Nui Odyssey," with all album sales benefitting her Toki. Middlebury stood out particularly to Teave because of a connection with Middlebury alumnus Mike Nunziante '19 who studied abroad in Chile and had worked at Teave's school. Nunziante was among the sizable MAC audience on Friday as Teave put on her masterful performance.

Amidst the busyness of her current tour, Teave still found time to visit Middlebury, including going to a class, answering questions at a Q&A and performing for the community.

It was evident to all in attendance that Teave is a master at the height of her abilities. Yet following the conclusion of the tour, Teave will likely return to work bettering her music school, and with it, hopefully the lives of many back on her home island.

Teave made mention of the reason for this in her Q&A – "There really is this umbilical cord for all the Rapa Nui people that really pulls you back," she said.

It seems even accomplished pianists cannot resist this pull; and especially for Teave, heritage will always be more important than fame.

COURTESY PHOTO

Mahani Teave, classical pianist from Rapa Nui, performed at Middlebury last Friday.

From the archives: a spooky history of Halloween postcards

"From the Archives" is an opportunity for various writers to visit the Middlebury Special Collections and write about a different artifact each week. The Special Collections boasts hundreds of thousands of historic items, and through this column we encourage writers to explore not only the college's history, but also the history of the world

CHARLIE KEOHANE
Editor at Large

When you think of a romantic holiday, you probably think of Valentine's Day, a day dedicated to love. Save for a cute couple's costume, Halloween is typically a night of trick-or-treating and scary movies. Halloween is perhaps one of the least romantic holidays to come to mind. However, this wasn't always the case.

Historically, the last night of October was regarded as an ideal for witchy rituals from fortune-telling to Celtic customs, many of which focused on the search for love. In the spirit of Halloween, I ventured into Special Collections to visit their extensive collection of Halloween-themed picture postcards and learn about their fascinating history.

The book "Halloween: Romantic Art and Customs of Yesteryear" by Diane Arkins gave me valuable insight into the history of Halloween rituals and their accompanying visual art. According to Arkins, the first two decades of the twentieth century were known as the "Golden Age of Postcards." The country was "smitten with the phenomenon of the illustrated picture postcard" as inexpensive yet enchanting art pieces to send to friends and family.

Companies played into postcard popularity with cards for every occasion, including Halloween. For a society emerging from strict Victorian morals, Halloween provided an exciting opportunity for young people to socialize, and fortune-tellers rose in popularity as party entertainment.

In Special Collections, I paged through dozens of illustrated Halloween-themed postcards. Postcards typically depicted a variety of detailed Halloween-themed imagery, often including autumnal symbols like pumpkins, apples, witches and mirrors.

Some postcards, like "Hallowe'en Precautions," displayed a more specific ritual to find true love. The design of this postcard is intricate, with layers of illustrations and silver embossing. The card reads, "If at midnight with a pumpkin light / You steal to your room unseen / In the mirror appears the face, / Of your lover true on Halloween."

According to Arkins, mirrors and other reflective surfaces were a common element of Halloween rituals, promising to give curious young people a glimpse of a future lover.

When you think of a romantic holiday, you probably think of Valentine's Day, a day dedicated to love. Save for a cute couple's costume, Halloween is typically a night of trick-or-treating and scary movies. Halloween is perhaps one of the least romantic holidays to come to mind. However, this wasn't always the case.

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You don't have to wait until Feb. 14 to search for love. Consider looking backward in history at some of the fun and enchanting Halloween rituals, and send a postcard to a friend or family member to celebrate the season.

HALLOWEEN
PRECAUTIONS.
If at midnight with a pumpkin light
You steal to your room unseen
In the mirror appears the face,
Of your lover true, on Hallowe'en

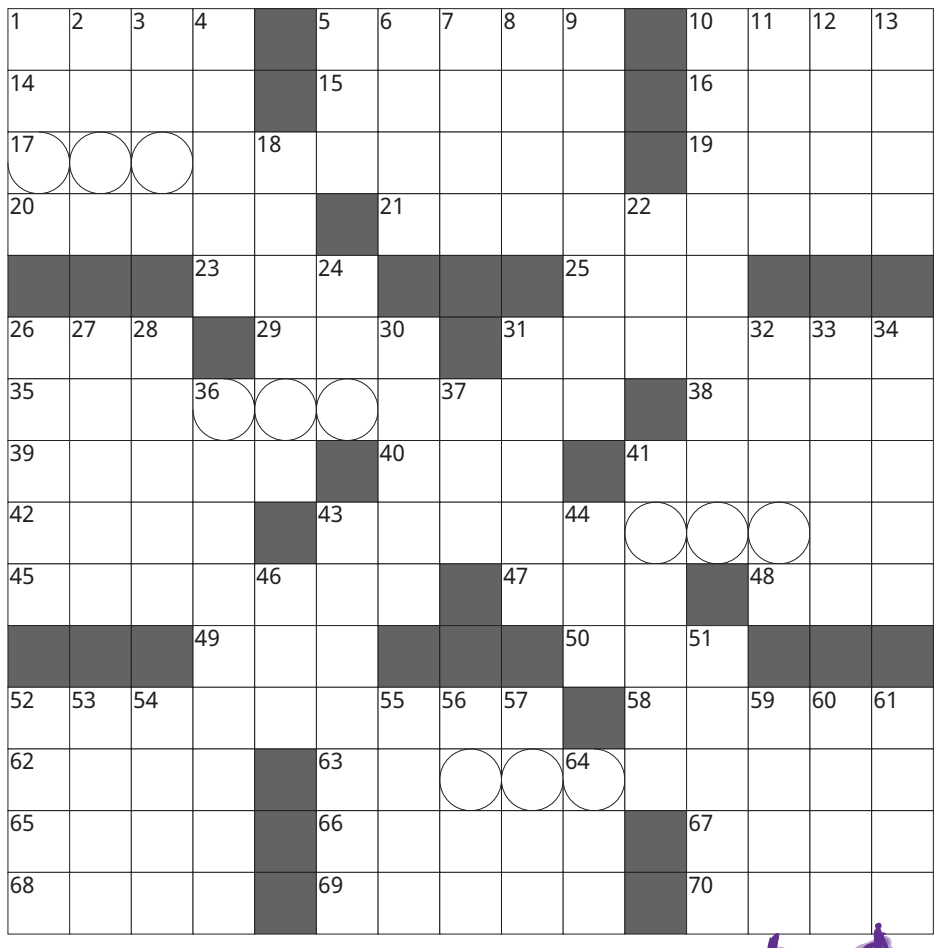
COURTESY PHOTO/SPECIAL COLLECTIONS

An example of a Halloween postcard playing into a superstitious ritual.

COURTESY PHOTO/SPECIAL COLLECTIONS

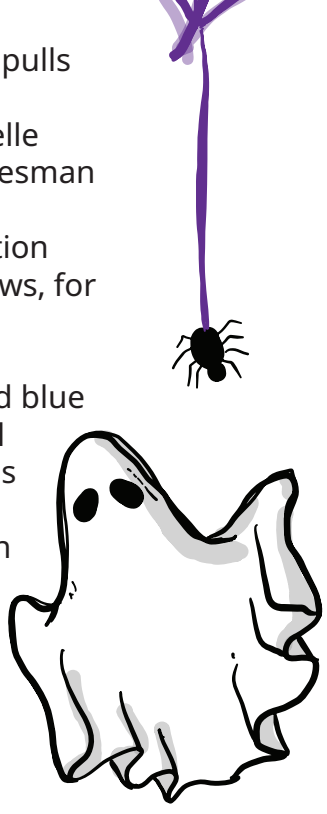
This Halloween postcard depicts a young woman trying to peer into the future with some help from a witch.

It's Spooky Season!



ACROSS
1 "The Wizard of Oz" author
5 2010 movie starring Emma Stone that you could probably blow off
10 Vocal range from F3to F5
14 Dog food brand
15 Fantasize
16 Student who doesn't play sports, abbr.
17 Spooky wasteful project
19 ___-Ball
20 "Fiddler" matchmaker
21 Upcoming spooky holiday and a bit of a hint to this puzzle's circled letters
23 A witch's may be pointy
25 Ingredient in a smoothie, often
26 Singer Grande, to fans
29 Sin reciprocal, in trig
31 The daily grind
35 Spookily confounds
38 Air pollution
39 Remove, as a corsage
40 Big head
41 Make amends
42 Cooking fat
43 It and Coraline, for a spooky two
45 Words written in stone
47 Mars or Venus, e.g.
48 Summer hrs.
49 Slip-up
50 Coffee holder
52 Director whose mother delivered the line "I'll have what she's having"
58 Country with an area more than 2,500 miles north-south, but averages fewer than 200 miles east-west
62 Wheel holder
63 Spooky conversational no-no
65 Sum of terms divided by number of terms
66 Fill with joy
67 Belted
68 How most sports are broadcast these days
69 Having more marbles?
70 Sounds of disapproval

DOWN
1 Infant
2 Plant for soothing burns
3 "Once ___ a time"
4 There are 12 of these per year
5 Tokyo, previously
6 "Drat!"
7 Company responsible for Sonic the Hedgehog
8 Southern address
9 Earhart and Bedelia, for two
10 Has as a boss
11 Many a summer vacation spot
12 Many a summer climbing spot
13 Partner of shut, on a case
18 Church official
22 4-D when 21-A occurs
24 Chinese general on a menu
26 Harm
27 Unnecessarily increased, as a score
28 Glass pyramid architect
30 Prague native
31 Corp. shake-up
32 "In ___" (sullen)
33 Word that means the same thing if you make the first letter the letter immediately preceding it in the alphabet
34 Come back up
36 Final and unhappy outcome
37 NYC airport
41 Kidnap
43 Pixies
44 ___ Kippur
46 Conjugation of "to be"
51 White sheet wearer, perhaps
52 "Bohemian Rhapsody" actor Malek
53 Team that pulls
54 Dull
55 Simba's belle
56 Israeli statesman Abba
57 Memorization
59 Hoppy brews, for short
60 It may be highlighted blue in an email
61 Heart scans
64 Anthem contraction



Middlebury Football tied for first in the NESCAC with three games remaining

By BLAISE SIEFER
Staff Writer

COURTESY PHOTO/WILL COSTELLO

Middlebury has scored 20 touchdowns this season, ranking fourth in the NESCAC.

Who can stop Middlebury football this season?

The Panthers have faced a series of tests in recent weeks, but nothing has shaken them yet.

Three weeks ago, the Panthers triumphed over Williams College (2–4) in the midst of a torrential downpour. The following week, they handed Trinity College (5–1) its first home loss in over five years, and then crushed Bates College (0–6) by over 40 points last weekend. Now, Middlebury (5–1) is riding a four-game winning streak with their sights firmly set on the NESCAC title.

If the Panthers win their remaining three games, they are guaranteed to earn at least part of the NESCAC title. Their final matchups include Colby College (3–3), Hamilton College (1–5) and Tufts University (5–1). Quarterback Cole Kennon '23.5, who co-captains the Panthers football team, indicated the prospect of a trophy is not distracting them.

"We're putting an emphasis on taking the rest of the year one game at a time," Kennon said. "We're not looking at the title until the job's finished."

The team's record is a testament to their prowess on both sides of the ball. Leading the Panthers on the offensive line is Kennon, who is averaging 280.17 passing yards per game. He previously led the team to a 7–2 record in 2022.

As the saying goes, "defense wins championships," and the Panthers have certainly taken this to heart. The Panthers' defense ranks second in the NESCAC in average points against per game (15), trailing only Trinity (13.5). Super Senior Febs Finn Muldoon '23.5 and John McCool '23.5 rank second and fourth in the conference in tackles, respectively. On the line of scrimmage, Tomás Kenary '24.5 and Dave Filias '25 have been playing like All-NESCAC players.

The Panthers' kicker, Zach Levy '25, has received the NESCAC Special Teams Player of the Week honor twice this year, highlighting the team's well-rounded membership.

Middlebury still has their work cut out for them. In the next two weeks, they will hit the road, facing Colby on Oct. 28 and Hamilton on Nov. 4. Additionally, the Panthers' biggest competitors — Trinity (20-15), Tufts and Wesleyan University (4–2) –– are all equally motivated to take the title come Nov. 11.

"We've got to ensure that we're taking care of the ball and eliminating turnovers," Kennon said. "Any game that we do that effectively, we'll have a shot to win because of how stellar our defense is."

If the Panthers do keep showing composure in difficult moments, get the duck boats ready — they could be on their way to their fifth conference title since the start of the century.

COURTESY PHOTO/STEVE MCLAUGHLIN

Leo Urena '24.5 (#53) lines up for the snap in the Panthers' game against Wesleyan

MIDDLEBURY FIELD HOCKEY MARCHES ON WITH 14-0 STREAK

By CHARLES CROUNSE
Senior Sports Editor

When the seniors of Middlebury field hockey stood out on the line for the final time of the regular season at Peter Kohn Field, there was a tangible excitement in the air. Typically, a matchup against the seventh ranked team in the nation might instill a fear of not being able to win in front of a cheering home crowd. For the Panthers, however, a win seemed almost inevitable — it only took three and a half minutes of play against Tufts for the Panthers to score. From there, they never looked back, securing a dominant 6–0 victory.

Middlebury now sits comfortably atop the NESCAC standings, 14–0 overall and 9–0 in the conference after the weekend with only one conference game remaining. A prolific offense and a resolute defense has allowed the team to outscore opponents seemingly at will, all while conceding just eight goals all season. Co-captain Audrey Lazar '24, who recorded a goal and an assist in the win against the Jumbos, indicated that despite the team's impressive record, the players are not overly concerned about the pressure that comes with their success.

"Although we celebrate the successes of our team, after each game, we often turn our attention to the next upcoming one," Lazar wrote in an email to The Campus. "We do not practice and play with the intention of defending a win streak."

The team's excellent record has been inspired by a number of impressive individual performers. Katie George '23.5 and Amy Griffin '24.5 lead the team, scoring with 16 and 14 goals respectively, while Griffin and Caroline Segal '24.5 lead in assists. Lazar, Lilly Branka '24.5, and Sadie LeStage '24 are all having impressive scoring seasons as well, with nine, six and three goals, respectively. However, Lazar highlighted that the team is much more than a few stand-alone talents.

"Each member of [the team] contributes to our collective heartbeat — something that continues to grow stronger as the season progresses," Lazar said. "We also will continue to build strong connections with each other on and off the field."

Looking toward the rest of the season, the field hockey team hopes to defend its NESCAC and NCAA titles, both of which they have won for an unprecedented six years running. For the moment, however, the team isn't overly concerned with chasing titles.

"Our main goal is to improve our quality of field hockey every single day that we have the opportunity to play together," Lazar said.

If the undefeated defending champions continue to press forward and improve, it is difficult to name a team that could deny them a seventh consecutive national title.

COURTESY PHOTO/DAVID ZHAO '27

The field hockey team stormed to a 6-0 win over Tufts on Saturday.

Seven Questions with Amy Delman

By LEXI LINAFELTER

Sports Editor

Amy Delman '24 is a senior captain of the Middlebury women's tennis team and economics major, originally from Great Neck, N.Y. She recently concluded her fall season after advancing to the quarterfinals in the national ITA Cup alongside her doubles partner, Sahana Raman '25. In this installment of seven questions, Delman discusses the fall season, her goals for the upcoming spring season and the traditions that make Middlebury women's tennis unique.

Lexi Linafelter: To start off, you and Sahana advanced to the quarter-finals for doubles in the ITA Cup tournament in Rome, Ga. last week. Can you give me a play-by-play of the tournament? What was the experience like?

Amy Delman: Yeah! The ITA Cup is a national tournament, so we had to advance throughout the regional rounds which were a few weeks ago. At that tournament, we either had to get to the finals or win the whole thing to get to the ITA cup. We played a bunch of matches there and ended up losing to the number one seed in the finals, so going to Rome, there were 16 teams that were the best in the country. We knew there wasn't going to be a single match that was easy because everyone who was there was top of their region. We were probably the lowest-seeded team there, and we were still super excited because we are pretty highly ranked in our region, which just shows how strong the competition is outside the northeast. In Rome, we had a first-round match against Vassar, and we just played really well. We dominated them relatively easily, winning 6-0 and 6-0, so we got the number one seed in the next round, and played the quarter-final match against a team that had won the national championship the prior year, from Sewanee. It was a really tough match, we lost in the third set, in a tiebreak. The match finished around one in the morning because of the rain delay, so we didn't start until 11:45 PM, which is insane. We were only a few points away from beating them, and as much as we were upset, it showed us that we are in it with the best teams in the country and spring is our main season, so we're really looking forward to that.

LL: How was the fall season overall?

AD: The fall season was great! Fall season is really interesting, and definitely more chill than the spring season. A lot of it was working out what you work on in practice and it's way more individually focused. After the summer, when people have been practicing different amounts there are varying levels of intensity, so our first weekend was just everyone trying to get back into it — as the weekends kept going on, the intensity definitely increased and it was fun to see everyone get into a more competitive state. It was especially cool when our freshman, the only freshman on our team, hopped right in and really matched the level of the program. It was a quick, but really fun fall.

LL: Do you prefer fall or spring tennis? Why?

AD: I personally love the spring so much. Fall is so different because it is more individually focused; you are playing the matches for yourself versus in the spring, you are really in it as a team. You and all of your teammates are playing the same team, whereas in the fall I might be playing someone from Williams and my teammate could be playing someone from Skidmore. The fall feels a bit like junior tennis in that sense, but the spring feels like a true, collegiate tennis experience, which I love and can't wait for my last one.

LL: What are your goals for the spring season?

AD: I've had two seasons already and we've gotten so close to winning the NESCAC championship both years — we have actually been in the finals playing Wesleyan for the past seven years in a row, and we've lost each one. So, our goal first and foremost is to win the NESCAC championship. We've never won a NESCAC, so before we even think about the NCAA tournament, the conference championship is our goal. On top of that, as a senior, I really want to play the best that I can for my team and for myself and really just leave it all out there. I think if we do that as a team, we can go past the semi-finals and take it to the next level, which I think we can do and need to do in order to beat the top four teams in the country.

LL: Do you have any fun traditions or rituals before a match?

AD: As a team, when we go to away games, we each get assigned a person to write a letter to and we exchange them on the bus. You write whatever you want that person to hear before a match and it really goes to show how close we are as a team. I think it's a really nice tradition to bring the team element into a very individual sport, which is something that I think we all want from our collegiate team experience. When you open that letter and see how much your teammates value you as a teammate and a person, it makes you so excited and pumped up to play the following day. I keep all my letters in my bag, and obviously, sometimes matches don't go your way and it means a lot to open the letter and know how much your teammates value you and be able to tell them how much you value them too.

LL: Who is your favorite professional tennis player?

AD: I love Maria Sharapova, I've actually gotten to meet her a few times and I really like her style of play; she is really aggressive and such a fierce competitor. On the men's side, Roger Federer is obviously such a class act and I've always really looked up to him.

LL: Finally, and most importantly, what is your spirit animal and why?

AD: My team actually has spirit animals, so everyone got assigned one and I was assigned a moose; I'm not sure where that came from, but since everyone agreed together that I am a moose and that's who I am to my team, I will go with that! Any animal that is loyal, a team player and super competitive is a big part of being a college tennis player and is hopefully how others see me.

Editor's Note: This interview has been lightly edited for brevity and clarity.

COURTESY PHOTO

Amy Delman '24 advanced to the quarterfinals of the ITA Cup with her doubles partner Sahana Raman '25.

MIDDLEBURY MAPLE RUN 2023
Vermont's "Sweetest" Half Marathon!
HALF MARATHON,
TEAM RELAY & 3-MILE FUN RUN
SUNDAY NOV 5, 2023
MIDDLEBURY, VT
What makes it so sweet?
•Beautiful scenic routes with views of the Green Mountains and Adirondacks.
•A mix of trail (10%), paved (45%), and dirt roads (45%) for the half marathon; all paved for 3-mile fun run.
•USATF-certified course that is well supported, with rolling hills and foliage views
WELL-ORGANIZED. GREAT SWAG. TOP FINISHERS RECEIVE VERMONT MAPLE SYRUP!
Form a 2-person team (6.5 miles each) and compete for team honors!
Registration is open at
MiddleburyMapleRun.com
Sweet socks for ALL registrants!

THROUGH OUR LENS: FOLIAGE, FALL AND THE UNEXPLORED

Continued from Page 1

and photos that encapsulate them. From sunrise hikes at the Snow Bowl, to composing photos at Bristol Falls and long hikes in the Adirondacks, it has been a goal of mine to experience the fall moments that people travel from all over the country to witness.

Two particular moments stand out.

On a sunny day in early October, I decided to take advantage of a permit I had reserved for the renowned Indian Head Mountain hike in the Adirondack Mountain Reserve. I headed out with hopes of catching sunset on the mountaintop. As I drove across Lake Champlain towards the expansive Adirondacks heading to the trailhead, I couldn't help but feel regret. Regret for the fact that this was my first time driving across this bridge, my first time venturing into the Adirondacks. As I neared the trailhead, the mountains rose more dramatically from the roadside, and the orange and red mountain sides began to dominate my view. I could not believe I had missed out on the beauty of the Adirondacks for the past three years.

Five miles and 3,500 feet of elevation gain later, I summited Indian Head. The fjord-like views at the top of the mountain were some of the best I have seen during my time at Middlebury. The skinny Lower Ausable Lake cuts through the steep mountain sides, speckled with various shades of reds, oranges and yellows.

After about an hour on the mountaintop, I found the composition for which I had been searching. As the sun dropped behind the western mountain face, I had forgotten about my regret, still in awe of the view and determined to capture the best photo of the scene as possible. I took the picture then quickly ran the 5 miles back to my car to make it back to Vermont in time for an evening Physics TA session.

The next morning, I woke up an hour before sunrise to go for a sunrise paddle on the Sugar Hill Reservoir, just 30 minutes from campus. Sugar Hill sits inside Moosalamoo National Recreation Area, providing views of the gradually-rising Green Mountains. When I arrived, the reservoir was perfectly still and the air cool enough to emit a light fog from the surface of the water.

I went out with aerial photography in mind, intending to capture a scene of a lone canoe on an otherwise untouched lake engulfed by vibrant fall colors. As usual, my motivation for this outdoor adventure was photography, but I came back to campus with more than just a photo. The views from the lone canoe reminded me how fortunate we are to have such proximate access to the outdoors, especially during this time of peak foliage.

Taking in the view on Indian Head Mountain. SAM ROUBIN

The narrow gravel path of national Forest Road 24b DYLAN TAYLOR

Sunrise canoe on Sugar Hill Reservoir, Ripton, VT. SAM ROUBIN

While the breathtaking beauty of foliage-coated mountain vistas is undeniable, there are far more inconspicuous fall scenes, like the extensive network of Vermont backroads, that hold equivalent power and charm. These, we hope, are not overlooked.

For me, Dylan, the backroads of Vermont are restorative. The college seems so far away. The landscape is constant and predictable, but majestic nonetheless: The Adirondacks rise gently above farmlands and trees, the canopy envelopes the road, a quiet stillness drapes the earth. And when the leaves fall, it's altogether magical.

Have you ever driven down Shacksboro Road? The gravel path hugs the Lemon Fair River, moving past small farmsteads and the occasional house. When a cool, gentle wind meets the overhanging trees, the road becomes laden with leaves—a sight few are lucky enough to see.

I remember standing alone on Shacksboro Road one morning this fall, the surrounding fog frozen in place, a fiery orange contrasting the bitter cold. It was stunning. Having found an ethereal scene fifteen minutes from the college, I wondered about the exceptional places I had yet to discover. And long after I leave Middlebury, I know I will wonder what landscapes and opportunities I left unexplored.

The next morning, the fog had lifted, and I headed in the opposite direction toward the Green Mountains. I had no destination.

A road winds through Vermont's National Forest SAM ROUBIN

An aimless drive down Vermont Route 125 eventually led me to National Forest Road 24b, little more than a small clearing in the trees. Most people turn back at Moosalamoo Campground but I continued further, crossing the North Branch Sucker Brook as the canopy grew denser, the path narrower, the going rougher. There, caught in a downpour amid the Vermont backwoods, I found the most picturesque scene. With the winter coming and my graduation impending, I question when — or if ever — I will go back.

We know Middlebury can feel overwhelming at moments — we have experienced it intensely these past three years. But we also realize that our time here is limited. When your course load gives you a breather, we encourage you to experience the surrounding environment how ever you can: by trekking, exploring or even driving aimlessly through some back roads. And when the college piles it on, do the same thing.